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WORLD SOCCER

The *INTERNATIONAL* Magazine

45p

WORLD CUP LATEST

Follow the road to Argentina

AN ENGLAND TRAINING SESSION

World Soccer

World Cup shocks in South America

Point for Peru

BRAZIL HELD...

Bogota, Sunday February 20

Colombia 0, Brazil 0

THE PRESSURE is on Brazil manager Oswaldo Brandao after the three-times World Cup winners began their 1978 bid with this let-down of a performance. Brandao had his problems before the game, what with death threats to his family and protests from the big clubs, angry at the amount of time he demanded of their stars.

Now his use of 4-4-2 — Mario Zagalo was sacked after the shock of a defensive outlook in 1974, remember — promises more trouble. Brandao explained it as legitimate tactics bearing in mind the need to obtain a result at 7,500 feet.

But unless his team are back on the winning track soon, and unless he can produce a settled side, he'll be hounded out of a job. Not that this would upset some superstitious Brazilian fans. Each time Brazil have won the World Cup they have changed managers on the way.

In 1958 Brandao took Brazil to Sweden and Vicente Feola took over for the finals; in 1962 Feola stepped down because of illness and Aimore Moreira did the necessary; in 1970 Zagalo replaced Joao Saldanha shortly before the finals.

This result in Bogota was a triumph for Blagoje Vidinic, the former Yugoslav international goalkeeper who steered Morocco to the 1970 finals and Zaire to West Germany in 1974. He had convinced his players that Brazil were nothing to be afraid of, and had the pleasure of seeing his team on top for much of the time in defence and midfield.

Colombia made the first chance after four minutes, but after Leao failed to hold a shot from Arturo Segovia, Jorge Caceres missed his kick. Colombia were lucky when a Roberto shot bounced off unsighted goalkeeper Geronimo Lopez after 25 minutes and again five minutes from time when substitute Valdomiro — one of the three 1974 survivors — whipped the ball into the net.

To Brazilian protests, and cheers from the 60,000 sell-out crowd, Argentine referee Miguel Angel Comesana ruled the goal out because of a foul. Leao was Brazil's best player, with midfielder Diego Umana the hero for Colombia. The teams:

Colombia: Lopez — Segovia, Cabledo, Zarate, Bolano — Rene, Umana, Calero — Ortiz, Viberto, Caceres.

Brazil: Leao — Za Maria, Amaral, Beto Fuscao, Wladimir — Givanildo (Cacapava 80), Falcao, Rivelino, Zico — Roberto, Oil (Valdomiro 80).

In South American group three, the same day, Peru held Ecuador 1-1 in Quito. Juan Carlos Oblitas, who spent an unhappy few weeks in Spain with Elche 18 months ago, put Peru ahead from a free kick just before half-time, while the equaliser came ten minutes from time.

The scorer was substitute Fabian Paz earlier, after 78 minutes, the 55,000 fans were stunned to silence when Angel Licciardi missed a penalty.

A useful point for Peru, though coach Marcos Calderon let it be known he was disappointed with the showings of prodigals Hugo Sotil and Teofilo Cubillas.

Ecuador: Delgado — Mendez, Carrera, Villena, Klinger — Granda, Villafuerte, Gomez (Paz 66) — Hon, Licciardi, Nieto.

Peru: Quiroga — Soria, Melendez, Champitar, Diaz — Velasquez, Quesada, Cubillas — Munante, Sotil, Oblitas (Percy Rojas half-time).

Rivelino, captain of Brazil.

CLOUGH STAYS

BRIAN CLOUGH'S decision not to rejoin Derby County at the last minute, and to stay as manager of Nottingham Forest, the club who gave him a job when he was out of work, poses questions that may never be fully answered.

Clough said that had he still been without a job he would have "crawled all the way back to Derby."

But as far as the future is concerned, the growing rumours that he would be on top of the short list for any vacancy in the England managerial stakes some time hence, might have been another reason for his decision to remain where he is with his assistant Peter Taylor.

Derby County, struggling near the bottom of the English first division, saw Clough and Taylor as the men to put them back on the road to prosperity. Clough admits that his heart is still with the club and many people have maintained a campaign to bring Clough back to the Baseball Ground.

Well, he has had the chance, and turned it down. Now Colin Murphy, the man appointed caretaker manager after Dave Mackay was sacked, must continue and hope that he can convince his club directors that he is the man for the job.

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FRONT COVER PICTURE
England captain Gerry Francis is flanked by Pele and Bobby Moore. Picture by Peter Robinson.

Will England lea
or will the
be quickl

AT HALF-TIME in the Wembley press box a colleague asked me to confirm for him England's heaviest home defeat by continental opponents.

That was easy: Hungary, 6-3, in 1953.

His thinking was obvious — the Dutch were in such a different class (a **totally** different class, some wit added) that England might have been overrun five, six or seven.

Yet during the second half, as Jan Peters took his eye off the ball and missed his kick with only Clemence to beat, and as Kees Kist put a chance badly wide, another thought struck me.

The English have always proved themselves very insular, very stubborn. Denis Nevill, once Dutch national coach, said that English football learned nothing from Hungary.

And I fear that because Holland won *only 2-0* England will learn little from this extravaganza. Everyone will be content to say: "Well, they were World Cup runners-up, how many did we expect to be beaten?"

And leave it at that.

The national press, the morning after the nightmare before, had it right when they refused to blame Revie too harshly, generously praising the Dutch.

But if Revie escaped a little of the fire, the whole English concept of soccer stood indicted, Revie admitted as much.

"We've got to go back to the drawing board," he said. "We've got to start all over again learning about control of the ball, passing, finishing — the lot."

Kind words

It was remarkable that in the glory of victory the Dutch still had kind words for us afterwards.

Jan Zwartkruis, the air force captain who is one of the longest-serving caretakers in the game after eight months, said how much he liked the English action style of football.

"That's because you can beat us when we play it," someone remarked.

Zwartkruis resurrected the old term 'kick and rush'. That surely was the ultimate insult — or the ultimate truth. For years we have labelled our lesser parks teams as exponents of kick and rush. Now here was the Dutch manager applying those very words to the *full England team*.

rn from defeat
e Dutch display
ly forgotten?

by Keir Radnedge

"English players run all the time for 20-30 minutes. Our players, however, play for five or ten minutes at a time."

And that was quite enough to outclass England. In fact, England were done for after the first ten minutes when the Dutch made it brilliantly obvious just what a mis-match this game was.

In the first few minutes the acceleration of Hugo Hovenkamp — an exciting newcomer I was seeing for the first time — and Johnny Rep, made English defenders most noted for their speed and fitness look as lithe as carthorses.

When it came to basic technique such as ball control, Johan Cruyff and Rob Rensenbrink brought back to mind the epithet we used to apply to Stanley Matthews, playing as if the ball were tied to their bootlaces.

Cruyff surprised me. I hadn't expected him to play such a full part in the match. In fact, he didn't need to, as he realised later on.

All the running, all the work, all the directions stemmed from him. But England made it easy for him. Everyone thought Paul Madeley was drafted in for the specific purpose of shutting out Cruyff. Instead, when Madeley was substituted in the 62nd minute it was one of the first times I had noticed he was on the pitch.

As for the rest of the England defence, it's difficult to find much better to say. Kevin Beattie, such a powerhouse moving forward in club matches, rarely strayed from his left back zone — and when he did was caught far and wide.

Mike Doyle, presumably supposed to be tidying up, was bypassed when it mattered most, and poor Dave Watson had a most unsatisfactory time.

Not that this was as much his fault as the fact that as a typical English stopper he looked lost and without an effective role against a team whose concept of attack has left the old, traditional schemes years behind.

It was in midfield that England were exposed. Where were the men to harass and rush the super smooth Dutch out of their arrogant strides? Surely even if England were to be beaten, we could raise a gallop of protest? But it seemed not. The midfield was anonymous, though Brian Greenhoff did show a couple of sparks of initiative before an early arm injury forced him off.

Of the attack, the least said the better. Kevin Keegan ran into the back alleys, and Stan Bowles and Trevor Francis had little enough service to develop.

Jan Peters scores Holland's first goal against England at Wembley.

Indeed, the sphere of the game in which England are supposed to excel, tackling, also found them lacking.

Not only were the Dutch sharper, more decisive and confident in man-to-man challenge, but they went into the tackle already thinking ahead to the direction in which they would come out and what options would be open.

Johan Neeskens, surprisingly, said afterwards that he thought England, with Mike Channon, might still get the better of Italy. But, as he also admitted, he was biased in that he felt the "World Cup Finals without England aren't really the World Cup Finals."

It was Neeskens too who paid England the compliment of saying that Holland this night were a better team than in the World Cup Final of 1974.

Not that this one victory would necessarily make it easier for Holland themselves against Belgium in the World Cup qualifiers.

"Different team, different style," he murmured. But the Dutch certainly looked as if they had regained a lot of confidence after a disappointing nine months in which they upset themselves in the European Championship, then struggled against Northern Ireland and Iceland.

Piet Schrijvers in goal was the weak link, but seems to be the favourite for that job after all the disputes over the years which have blighted officialdom's opinion of PSV's Jan van Beveren.

Suurbier, Krol, Rijsbergen are all names whose evocation needs little to sum up what they represent in terms of class and skill.

With Neeskens and 22-year-old NEC starlet Jan Peters in midfield it seems to matter little who plays with them. At Wembley it was the hard-working unprepossessing Willy van der Kerkhof. But with Wim Jansen's recovery after a year-long injury break and Arie Haan surely only going through a temporary lean phase with Anderlecht, Holland seem unfairly spoiled for choice.

That's the case up front too. If you choose Cruyff, Rep and Rob Rensenbrink you must leave Ruud Geels and Kees Kist on the bench. And Geels, top scorer in Holland with 21 goals, has proved his goal potential over the years.

Kist is an emergent star, earning his place in the Wembley squad with the five goals he hit for Alkmaar in a league game ten days before.

That's one of the lessons for England. It's not just a question of coaching, of organisation, of correct team selection. There's much more to it. Just as with Hungary in the fifties, Real Madrid, Ajax and Brazil a lot of it — but not all — comes back to sheer natural ability.

Three years ago I had a long talk with Dick Schneider, eloquent captain of Feyenoord, before the Dutch exploded in the World Cup but after the successes at club level.

"I think our success has come about," he said, "because by chance a marvellous generation of footballers have all matured at once.

BRAZIL PIC THEIR WOR CUP SQUA

World Soccer's chief South American correspondent reports from

WITH THE national championship over, professional soccer players on their compulsory one month holiday during January and the various state leagues not due to start until the end of March, all eyes of soccer mad Brazil, where the game is a religion, are focused on the squad of 25 players picked by national team coach Osvaldo Brandao for the World Cup preliminary group games against Colombia and Paraguay during February and March.

As usual, there has been criticism from many sides on Brandao's choice and there is some justification in this over the by-passing of three top Fluminense players and the inclusion of Luiz Pereira who plays for Atletico Madrid as this is the first time a player not playing in Brazil has been picked. It is widely commented that the exclusion of Fluminense captain Carlos Alberto Torres and forward Paulo Cesar was due to internal politics in the Brazilian Sports Confederation, but there is no apparent explanation for overlooking half Carlos Alberto Pintinho.

Luiz Pereira says that he already has permission from his club to play in the qualifying games and Brandao says he will call on him if his experience is really needed. He would join three other players in the squad who were in Brazil's last World Cup line-up — Leao, Marinho and Rivelino.

Brazil's unbeaten record last year, when they also won the Atlantic Cup and the US Bicentennial tournament easily in spite of never fielding a really full strength side, makes them hot favourites to reach the 1978 finals. But Brazil never looks back and, as mentioned in last month's WORLD SOCCER, they are looking further ahead than the qualifying games.

Coach Brandao, a keen experienced observer who is seldom wrong in analysing the failings of his own team and those of their rivals, realizes that Brazilian soccer has not quite got over the loss of Pele. "A genius has gone and we are almost at the end of a generation of players. New players are continually coming up, but everybody wants to discover Pele's successor in them as soon as they get a bit of fame," he says and adds as an afterthought: "But I ask myself, when will such a player really appear. I only wish I had one now."

With these words Brandao shows that he is well aware of the squad's limitations. "There are three or four players of class vital for the functioning of the team. Everybody knows that — Rivelino, Zico, Nelinho, Marinho. If they are inspired, things will turn out well," he says.

Fluminense forward Gil, one of Brazil's outstanding newcomers.

Modestly Brandao warns: "We had a few positive results last year and in some matches the team played quite well. Against the Soviet Union in December we could have won more easily (result 2-0) with a team which excluded players from 18 clubs then still involved in the final stages of the national championship. All this convinces people here that everything is done, but that isn't so. It's not going to be easy in the World Cup preliminary games. Everyone will specially want to beat Brazil. Optimism is a good thing, but not the anticipated euphoria which we usually have to put up with and fight against in Brazil."

Brandao admits however that there are promising newcomers who have quickly shown their quality. "Brazilian soccer is finding its feet after the changes introduced by a new generation of players which partly made its appearance at the 1974 World Cup finals, but which only now is going to be entrusted with the full responsibility of putting Brazil back at the very top."

And he defended his choice of players: "May be one or another player should be in and I didn't pick him. That always happens. But here everybody has his own selection. I chose the players which are not only the best in my mind, but also those who I think will adapt themselves best to my plans. But there are also problems in team selection which are not immediately visible. For example, I advised one defender I wanted to pick to have an operation to avoid problems, but he didn't listen and when the time came I had to leave him out, at least for the moment."

The selection: "It's a team in the usual Brazilian style. The two flank defenders go up well into attack; one marking half (a kind of sweeper) and two to attack and the wings stay well on the line. There are also players with real ability who kick the ball well such as Nelinho, Rivelino, Zico and Marinho and that helps a lot. The system is well known and it's up to the players to carry it out well."

The newcomers: "Carlos Alberto Pintinho is a half with a lot of fighting spirit and strength. His good positioning makes him a very useful player both in attack and defence. Forward Paulo Isidoro's ball play is excellent and he is good at short passing and quick near goal. (These are the only two players who will be in the squad for the first time."

Brandao says he wants men who can play in various positions without the teamwork suffering — like Carlos Alberto who defends equally well on both flanks and Falcao who

K LD D

by ERIC WEIL

n Rio de Janeiro

Zico — highly rated in Brazil.

w rks well in midfield and moves into attack easily.

About the future: "Mine depends on results," says Brandao with a smile "That of the team looks good. The best players are there with the same fundamental play — speed and good ball control."

Brandao did not want to name his possible line-up, but general opinion is that for the qualifying games it will be Leao, Nelinho, Amaral, Beto Fuscao, Marinho, Falcao, Rivelino, Zico, Gil, Roberto, Lula.

Brazil seems to be better prepared than any other South American country at this stage and there seems to be no secrecy. As was the case in the past, reporters and photographers have easy access to the players and coaches at training sessions and where the squad is concentrated.

In last month's WORLD SOCCER I quoted one of the Brazilian assistant coaches saying that Brazil could cause a surprise at the next World Cup by playing more of a European style, but this did not seem to be in evidence.

Limelight

In fact two players I spoke to, one a World Cup veteran (Marinho) and another who only came into the limelight last year (Falcao) were quite emphatic.

Marinho said: "If there are none of these surprise results we should be in Argentina in 1978. We haven't won the matches yet, but I don't think it's a surprise to anybody that Brazil are hot favourites. The team is playing well and in the United States last year we had difficult rivals in England and Italy, but we beat them with our style. I don't understand why they are saying that we have to change our style and play more modern football."

Falcao, who isn't sure he'll make the first team because he thinks there are better halves in the selection, also said that the Brazilian player, above all, likes to play the ball, control it and pass it well and he does not feel comfortable when he has to follow a rigid system.

***Zezé* Moreira, coach of Libertadores Cup holders Cruzeiro who has at one time been in charge of the national squad, did not share the same view however.**

"The Brazilian footballer is not fit enough to face European teams with success," he said after his club's matches against Bayern Munich for the Inter-Continental Cup and, in the light of his experiences in these matches, he has a point.

"It is necessary to unite the individual talent with team work and all this with an adequate physical preparation and until Brazil attains this combination it will not get positive results against the best European teams. Here we always rely on the player's undoubted individual skills to overcome all problems, but that's a big mistake."

Moreira also criticised the lack of speed of the majority of Brazilian players which makes it hard for them to mount surprise attacks.

Indeed, after Brazil's 2-0 victory (with late goals) against the Soviet Union in December, they were strongly criticised by their own press for their lack of quick passing and changing position which would have unsettled the young and inexperienced Russian team and also for their lack of teamwork and ideas to break down the Russian defence.

At the time Soviet coach Valentin Nikolaiev said that Brazil, although they deserved to win, were slow and they seemed to have no more outstanding players like Pele, Garrincha or Didi who helped them to three World Cups. While praising newcomers such as Zico, Nelinho and Gil, he said they were not in the same class and opinions which already make Brazil favourites for the 1978 World Cup seem to be completely without foundation.

So this is Brazil's team today, analysed by experts. For the moment they look in far better shape than any other South American country.

Goalkeepers: Leao (Palmeiras), Jairo (Coritiba), Valdir Peres (Sao Paulo); **Backs:** Nelinho (Cruzeiro), Ze Maria (Corinthians), Amaral (Guarani), Edinho (Fluminense), Beto Fuscao (Gremio), Marco Antonio (Vasco da Gama), Marinho (Botafogo), Vladimir (Corinthians); **Halves:** Toninho Cerezo (Atletico), Falcao (Internacional), Cacapava (Internacional), Givanildo (Corinthians), Rivelino (Fluminense); **Forwards:** Gil (Fluminense), Valdomiro (Internacional), Roberto (Vasco da Gama), Zico (Flamengo), Paulo Isidoro (Atletico), Nilson Dias (Botafogo), Palinha (Cruzeiro), Lula (Internacional).

In short

THE TRANSFER market has jumped sky high and there is practically no activity during this close season. Everybody is after Botafogo's international back Marinho whom they call the "Blonde Whirlwind", but his club wants a cluster of top players plus a fortune for him.

An exception was Chilean international back Elias Figueroa whose value was reportedly quoted at a million dollars, but Brazilian champions Internacional had to let him go for a mere 300,000 (with only 100,000 of it cash down) to Chilean club Palestino because the player was home sick and had apparently also received kidnap threats to his children.

POLITICS, as usual, also filled out the close season as for the first time in the history of Rio's most popular club, Flamengo, the opposition won club elections. Young millionaire Marcio Braga became president in a landslide after a campaign almost worthy of Jimmy Carter with radio and TV programmes and all the trappings. Flamengo are so deeply in debt that 83 per cent of their gate receipts go straight to creditor banks. Braga has promised to get financial experts to help pay off the debt and have enough over to buy a team of champions.

CRUZEIRO, the Libertadores Cup holders from Belo Horizonte, have been invited to play in the Rio de Janeiro Carioca League this season in an unprecedented step. Cruzeiro's playing record has been so outstanding in its 55 years of existence that it has virtually no opposition in its own Minas Gerais state league. The change will help Cruzeiro to keep up its standard and also obtain bigger gate receipts.

NAMES IN THE NEWS ... NAMES IN THE NEWS ... NAMES IN THE NEWS ...

JUST FONTAINE, who scored a record 13 goals in the 1958 World Cup Finals, has been awarded £68,000 by a French court, after his dismissal as manager last year by first division Paris Saint-Germain. The award covered loss of earnings for the remaining year of his contract, plus an award for damage to reputation.

ELIAS FIGUEROA, Chilean sweeper, has been named South America's footballer of the year for the third successive time. Figueroa, 30, has just rejoined Chilean club Palestino after five years with Brazil's International of Porto Alegre. He gained 51 votes in the poll — 17 ahead of new Brazilian star Zico. Roberto Rivelino was third. Pele gained two votes.

JAN RUITER has sorted out his dispute with Anderlecht in time for the Cup-winners' Cup quarter finals with Southampton. Ruiter was sent home to Holland in disgrace after a verbal attack on manager Raymond Goethals. But after his deputy, Francis Munaron, made some bad errors in the league, Ruiter was recalled, fined and forgiven. Goethals by now had another player to worry about — Southampton's Scotland striker Ted MacDougall, whom he rated the best of the English FA Cup-winners' players during a spying trip.

BAYERN DEFEATED

IN WEST GERMANY the surprise result of their Cup quarter final ties was the 4-2 defeat of European Cup holders Bayern Munich at Hertha BSC Berlin.

Bayern, missing the scoring touch of the injured Gerd Muller were beaten in extra time. They led after six minutes, were drawing 1-1 after 90 minutes and even went ahead again before Hertha came back with three goals in 16 minutes.

Another shock was Bayer Uerdingen's 6-3 victory over Eintracht Frankfurt. This match also went to extra time after the teams had been level at 3-3 after 90 minutes.

In the other quarter finals, Rot-Weiss Essen won 2-1 at Sp. Vgg Bayreuth, while earlier in the month FC Cologne put out FC Nurnberg 4-2. The draw for the semi finals, to be played on April 9, is: Bayer Uerdingen versus Hertha BSC Berlin; FC Cologne v. Rot-Weiss Essen.

Meanwhile, three second division clubs have reached the quarter final of the Dutch Cup. Groningen won 1-0 away to Utrecht, PEC Zwolle defeated another first division side Telstar 2-1 after extra time and MVV Maastricht beat fellow second division club Willem II by a similar score.

PSV Eindhoven, the Cup holders, have been drawn away to FC Den Haag, while the other quarter final pairings are: Groningen v. AZ '67; Twente v. NAC Bredea; PEC Zwolle v. MVV.

In the Greek first division Len Shannon had every reason for personal satisfaction this season and the club he is currently coaching, Olympiakos, are top on goal difference from the club he left at the end of last season, PAOK Salonika. But both Panthinaikos and AEK Athens are only two points behind these clubs and an interesting second half of the season is in prospect.

CRUYFF BAN

Referee Melero, who sent off Johan Cruyff during Barcelona's match against Malaga, is arrowed.

SPAIN ARE reluctantly joining the fences-and-ditches brigade to combat hooliganism after the riots which followed Johan Cruyff's expulsion against Malaga. Cruyff was suspended for three matches and fined £30 for insulting referee Ricardo Melero in the 2-1 victory in Nou Camp. And Barcelona were also fined a record £3,000 for the trouble in which fans tried to beat up the referee, set fire to a television vehicle, and stoned police.

In a statement the Federacion Espanola de Futbol warned Barcelona that any more trouble and their ground would be closed. They also took into account incidents during the Bilbao-Atletico Madrid match the next Sunday and called on all first and second division clubs to submit plans for fences or moats at their stadia.

Possibly the worst consequence of all this trouble for Barcelona was the fact that without Cruyff they lost twice on the trot — to Salamanca and at home to Bilbao — and Atletico Madrid took over the league leadership.

Sadly spectator incidents have become more common in Spain over the past year or two and the FEF have been slow in acting, or even in accepting that controversial principle that clubs are responsible for the behaviour of their fans.

It was all right to blame Rangers when their fans run amok in Barcelona after the 1972 Cup-winners' Cup final, but most of Spain took a dim view of the threatened Champions Cup ban on Real Madrid after a drunk attacked Gerd Müller and referee Erich Linemayr last year.

Several clubs did see the light. Sevilla were the first club to introduce fencing behind the goals, and Atletico Madrid put up temporary fencing for their Cup-winners' Cup ties with Rapid Vienna and Hajduk Split. That is now back up permanently.

But it's not a cheap operation. Real Madrid estimate that fencing Chamartin will cost £40,000.

'YOUNG' FRENCH SUCCESS

France 1, West Germany

A REMARKABLY young French team with an average age of 23 proved impressively neat and fluent to beat the world champions in front of 46,002 in the Parc des Princes.

West German manager Helmut Schoen included only Sepp Maier, Franz Beckenbauer — in his 103rd international — Rainer Bonhof, and Bernd Hölzenbein of his 1974 winning team.

The French hadn't beaten the Germans since their victory in the third place match in the 1958 World Cup, and they had to wait until the 53rd minute before right winger Olivier Rouyer, in his third international only, snapped a 20-yard shot past Maier.

Of the 12 matches the two nations have played, victories are now even at four apiece. Teams:

France: Rey — Battiston, Bis, Lopez, Janvion — Bathenay, Synaeghel (Sakanoko), Platini — Rouyer, Lacombe (P. Revelli), Amoros (Zanier).

West Germany: Maier — Vogts, Stielike, Beckenbauer, Dietz — Bonhof, Stielike, Flohe — Rummenigge, D. Muller (Beer), Hölzenbein.

Ref: Sanchez Ibanez (Spain).

...NAMES IN THE NEWS ... NAMES IN THE NEWS ... NAMES IN THE NEWS ...

GERD MÜLLER, who over the years has escaped serious injury and even played in the 1967 Cup-winners' Cup final with a special cast on a broken wrist, hasn't been so lucky now. His operation for a slipped disc couldn't have come at a worse time, with Bayern facing Kiev in the Champions' Cup quarter finals. Meanwhile he goes on coining in the cash. A magazine paid £5,000 for exclusive pictures of his operation. Muller himself told Dettmar Cramer that Bayern should use 19-year-old Turkish newcomer Erhan Onal, in his place against Kiev.

WOLFGANG WEBER, 32-year-old who scored that last-minute equaliser for West Germany in the 1966 World Cup Final, may have to quit because of a heart ailment.

And **TIBOR NYILASI**, the 22-year-old Ferencvaros star, may also have to retire because of headache and vision problems following a clash of heads in a European tie last year.

BRIAN LITTLE scored all three goals for Aston Villa in their 3-0 defeat of Queens Park Rangers in a League Cup semi final play-off at Highbury. Little, who has made one substitute appearance for England, scored twice in the first half to virtually ensure Villa's progress through to the League Cup Final — where they will meet Everton — for the second time in three years.

Valadier (7) of Montpellier scores the winning goal beating Marseille goalkeeper Migeon.

Blow for Marseille

A STAGGERING blow for French Cup-holders Marseille, knocked out by the amateurs of La Paillade, a third division (south) team from Montpellier. The match was played, as is the custom in France, on a neutral pitch at Ales, and there were 12,000 fans to see the holders' humiliation.

Ever since the draw there had been a great deal of publicity surrounding the tie between the no-hopers and the big stars, and La Paillade coach Robert Nouzaret said after their 2-1 win: "We deserved this — above all because for a week people have been talking and writing too much about us."

They were talking and writing plenty more after this result. Marseille were virtually at full strength, missing only the unsettled Argentine striker Hector Yazalde. But Norberto Alonso and Georges Bereta were in midfield with Daniel Emon on the left wing.

Though they looked the better team it was La Paillade who went ahead after 22 minutes through centre forward Raymond Doual. Alonso, Marseille's best player, headed the equaliser from Emon's corner six minutes later and they could have gone ahead from a string of second-half chances.

Alonso, Bereta and Emon all went close and it seemed La Paillade's veterans would be run into the ground.

Yet with two minutes to go, La Paillade's former Lyon and France star, Fleury di Nallo, broke away and 19-year-old left-winger Jean-Marc Valadier nodded in his cross for the winner. Marseille coach Jose Arribas paid with his job.

Other Cup shocks saw Lyon, beaten finalists last year, knocked out 1-0 by second division Gueugnon and championship challengers Bastia going down 3-1 to Avignon, also of the second division.

Lorient, another second division side and coached by former France and Real Madrid defender Louis Hon, beat Laval 1-0. Nancy — Michel Platini and all — went down 1-0 to Strasbourg and there was another third division success for Malakoff, who beat first division Valenciennes on penalties after a 2-2 draw.

FIVE DEAD AFTER RIOT

WHEN THE Guatemala army team went off quietly in their bus to play a friendly match in a small town near Santa Barbara they little realised the trouble they were going to cause.

Having duly won the match 6-3 the soldiers found themselves attacked by a mob of local inhabitants as they boarded their bus for the return journey.

The crowd used machetes, knives and clubs on the soldiers. The final death toll was five. Now a government inquiry is to be held to discover what exactly started the rumpus.

* * *

THE MOST experienced player in French football at present is virtually unknown outside his own country.

Andre Kabyle, a coloured player from Martinique, is in his 39th year but stills plays regularly in defence for Nimes in the first division. He recently turned out in his 431st match in the championship against Reims.

Kabuyle made his debut for the club in August 1964 after playing in a local team in St Louis. He considered that his 13th season as a professional is far from being an unlucky number for him and he plans to continue next season, too.

NICE WORK...if you can get it!

Fulham footballer Rodney Marsh tries his hand at tossing pancakes while training beauty queens for a pancake race. With Rodney are (from left) Dinah May, the reigning Miss Great Britain, Tony Bryne, the reigning Miss Mirrorbelle, and Janet Withey, Miss Britain.

ISRAEL GAIN ADVANTAGE

ISRAEL has been offered a surprising advantage in their World Cup qualifying round matches against Japan. For security reasons the Japanese refused to meet Israel in Tokyo and now both matches will take place in Israel, the first on March 6 and the second four days later.

But the Japanese have not surrendered the ties. They are busy making preparations with typical efficiency. National coach Niroshi Nimomala visited Israel on a spying mission, and watched the international against Greece which ended 1-1.

After the match he said he had spotted some weaknesses in the Israel team but thinks that the home side be favourites. Before leaving he found a Chinese restaurant in Israel to supply his players with food during their stay.

As part of their build-up Israel travelled to Thailand and Australia. The match in Thailand ended 3-3, while Israel drew 1-1 with Australia in Melbourne. Israel's equalising goal came from Giora Spigal but he will be missing from the World Cup games before his club, Lyon of France, have refused to release him.

Because of the World Cup matches the championship has been suspended for six weeks after 20 matches. There are 16 teams in the top division, with three being relegated at the end of the season. Only one club will be promoted from the second division, giving a top division of just 14 teams.

Maccabi Tel Aviv are favourites for the title, and have six players in the national squad, four in the actual team.

Bayern Munich, who recently lost 2-0 to Israel, have promised to return later in the year, free of charge, to compensate for their poor performance. Franz Beckenbauer said his club's performance was their worst of the past 11 years.

Bayern received 75,000 marks for their visit.

FEYENOORD SLIPPING

LATE last year Feyenoord appeared to be running away with the Dutch championship . . . but not any more. They have suffered a lean spell, lost confidence and lacked a player or players to boost their sagging morale.

As a result those clubs which were trailing Feyenoord seemingly in a hopeless position have renewed aspirations. As Feyenoord have slumped Ajax, with Rudi Geels averaging a goal a game, have improved dramatically, while PASV and AZ'67 are chasing hard.

An injury to international Wim Jansen, skipper and midfield organiser, has had a profound effect on Feyenoord and they are a little weak in vital positions, such as on the wings where Martin Vreyssen and Jan van Deinsen, though good players, are not good enough.

Ajax have changed their tactics in the pursuit of Feyenoord. Attackers Zuidema and Arnesen are being used more but it is the goals from Geels which are making the difference and Ajax are still not the team they were when they won three successive European Cup finals.

The winter break suited PSV. Their three new players (Smits, Willrich and Nilsson) were able to adjust to their new colleagues at training sessions and the team's overall performances are getting better and better.

Under the influence of Willem van Hanegem, AZ'67 have moved into fourth place. They are the leading scorers in Holland, with centre forward Kees Kist setting the pace. But it is Hanegem's left foot which creates the chances.

Hanegem is 33, plays nearer his own defence now, but retains his tremendous football brain will go on for at least another season.

Henri van der Steen

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ITALY with Keir Radnedge

Bologna faced by relegation

BOLOGNA — along with Milan, Inter and Juventus — have never been relegated, but anxiety that there's always a first time has led to the dismissal of coach Gustavo Giagnoni.

Bologna, the only Italian club to win the original Mitropa Cup in the 1930s, are next to bottom with 10 points from 15 games and the fact that in 1971-72 they were in an even more parlous state and survived is of little consolation.

Giagnoni has paid the price because he was the trainer in charge, and to sack him was the easy way out.

In fact Bologna's crisis has little to do with the coach, but a lot to do with three outside factors. The first is that though a medium-sized club, their fans expect them to be as successful as the Juventus and Torinos of the world. The fact that Bologna have never been relegated, that only 10-15 years ago they were sometimes more than a match for even Internazionale, helped maintain that deceptive tradition.

They're among the oldest of Italian clubs, founded in October 1909 and have won the championship seven times — in 1925, 1929, 1936, 1937, 1939 and 1941 and then in 1964 when they beat new European champions Inter in a play-off in Rome.

In 1970 and 1974 they won the Cup, yet no-one paid any attention to the future.

The second crisis factor has been the sale of stars such as Beppe Savoldi, Eraldo Pecci and Vittorio Caporale — the last two to become champions with Torino. In fact Savoldi and Pecci were sold in the same summer 18 months ago for nearly £2 million. Yet still Bologna couldn't pay their way, and that's one of the reasons the replacements were virtual unknowns.

The third factor in the crisis has been injuries — the typical problem which afflicts a struggling team. The loss for three months of *Azzurri* stopper Mauro Bellugi has been felt most keenly, but it didn't help either recently that veteran Brazilian centre forward Sergio Clerici was banned for three matches after getting over-excited during the 1-0 defeat by Napoli.

Taking over for the time being — as in 1971 when Edmondo Fabbri was fired — is Cesarino Cervellati, a Bologna winger who won half a dozen caps in the fifties.

No doubt he hopes to be back with the juniors in six months' time, happily out of the maelstrom which threatens to engulf president Luciano Conti.

Conti came to power in 1972, promising that in three years Bologna would have a team to rival for the *scudetto* again. Empty words.

Giacomo Bulgarelli, Bologna's long-serving former international midfielder, thought he could see where the club was going wrong some time ago. But his suggestions on a restructuring were rejected and he quit his ill-defined advisory post.

Now he may soon be recalled to a position of real power as Conti's executive director. In the meantime a team stricken by injuries and rapidly losing what little confidence remains, must start trying to claw their way up the league.

JOSE ALTAFINI may be playing for Swiss second division Chiasso, but he still lives in Turin. The 38-year-old centre forward who joined Milan from Palmeiras after taking part in the 1958 World Cup Finals with Brazil, travels up at weekends to earn his £1,000 match fee.

Dino Zoff of Italy.

BEARZOT UNDER FA PRESSURE

ITALY'S friendly with Belgium drew only 16,573 fans to the Olympic stadium in Rome to see a 2-1 win.

In fact, manager Enzo Bearzot was under pressure from some FA officials to include a player from Roma or Lazio to encourage a bigger turn-out. His only reply: "I'm paid to look after the football team, not the bank account."

In the event he rested Giacinto Facchetti, Romeo Benetti and Fabio Capello and, with Roberto Bettega injured, brought in the Torino trio of Renato Zaccarelli, Eraldo Pecci and Paolino Pulici with Juventus sweeper Gaetano Scirea.

Yet it was only with the second-half introduction of Claudio Sala and Benetti that Italy put it together well enough to provide a win for spy Don Revie. This was Italy's 10th win in 13 games against Belgium, thanks to goals from Graziani and Sala.

The Belgians, without Roger van Gool and Raoul Lambert hit back with a late penalty converted by goalkeeper Christian Piot.

Italy: Zoff (Castellini half-time) — Cuccureddu, Mozzini, Scirea, Tardelli — Zaccarelli, Pecci, Antognoni (Benetti 65) — Causio, Graziani, Pulici (Sala 59).

Belgium: Piot — Gerets, Broos, van den Daele, Renquin — Cools, van der Elst, Courant (Verheyen 62) — Beyhedt, Coeck, Wellens.

A few days before, in Genoa, the Italian under-21s put up a spirited fight before losing 2-1 to a full-strength Russia. Roma starlet Agostino di Bartolomei scored a late goal, but otherwise seemed overawed by the occasion. The Russian goals came from Blokhin (49) and Konkov (53).

There were only 5,000 fans and that included a couple whose minds weren't on the game. The Italians returned to the dressing rooms at the end to find their wallets stolen!

Italy U-21: Galli — Canuti, Manfredonia, Agostinelli, Cabrini — Boni, Galbiati, di Bartolomei — Guidolin (Rossi 56), Giordano (Virdis 49), Garritano.

Russia: Astapovsky — Kruglov, Kinshagasvili, Lovchev, Olshanski — Konkov, Buriak, Kolotov — Onishenko, Tarkhanov (Minaev 34), Blokhin.

TORINO STILL AHEAD

AFTER 15 games — the halfway mark — Torino led the league on goal difference from Juventus, and were still unbeaten.

But the champions found it tough going, drawing four of their first five games of 1977 and being lucky to recover at home for a 3-3 draw with Lazio who were twice ahead, and then to hold on 0-0 against a Milan who lost centre forward Egidio Calloni with a torn muscle after 15 minutes.

At least in that game coach Gigi Radice welcomed back midfielder Eraldo Pecci, the prodigy who broke an ankle early in the season — though his absence had been compensated by the fine form of Renato Zaccarelli.

The 26-year-old midfielder, though with Torino ten years, has only made his mark in the past four after spells on loan to Catania and Novara. It was at Novara that his promise was properly harnessed by — ironically — former Juventus coach Carlo Parola.

Zaccarelli, a naturally left-footed player, still admits to an ambition to win the Champions' Cup, despite the expulsion and three-match ban which followed this season's unhappy tie with Borussia Moenchengladbach.

He is also aiming for a place with the Italian team in Argentina next year — a contrast to 21-year-old Roberto Pruzzo, the Genoa spearhead eyed by Juventus.

Pruzzo, who tops the league scorers with 13 goals, says he'd like to play in the Finals but "next year would be too soon." Maybe not. This summer Pruzzo could join Juve, who were so impressed with the 18 goals which lifted Genoa out of *Serie B* last year that they let the Genovese have winger Giuseppe Damiani as an early down-payment on an eventual Pruzzo deal.

Pruzzo is valued at £2 million and Juve see him as the ultimate successor to Roberto Boninsegna who, though he may be 33 now, is still scoring goals regularly.

Two of the sweetest came in the 2-0 win over his old club Inter, though the next game saw Juve go down 3-1 to Roma — their second defeat of the season, and one which ended a league record run of six away wins in succession.

Three members of Italy's World Cup squad, left to right: Bettega, Sala and Causio.

Stupid joke death

THE SAD death of Luciano Re Cecconi, shot in a stupid practical joke in a jewellers' shop, stunned *Calcio*.

At 28, the blond Lazio midfielder was not so much a victim of the hapless jeweller, Bruno Tabocchini, as of the sycophantic hangers-on who turn the heads of impressionable footballers risen suddenly from rags to riches.

Re Cecconi's problem had always been lack of responsibility. It was this flaw in his character which meant he never maintained the consistency in his game to earn more than two caps at full international level, two for the under-23s.

Even the facts that he had a father in poor health, two children and a wife expecting another baby went by the board as he set out with team-mate Pietro Ghedin and another friend.

The three walked into Tabocchini's shop, Re Cecconi wriggled his hands in his pockets, and said: "Raise your hands, this is a hold-up."

How was he to know that Tabocchini had been raided before and kept a small Walther pistol under the counter? How was he to know that Tabocchini would swiftly reach down and shoot?

As Re Cecconi fell, Ghedin shouted: "Don't you recognise us? We play for Lazio . . ."

"I didn't know," said Tabocchini. "I don't know *any*thing about football."

Thousands turned out for the funeral, including former FA president Artemio Franchi, Roma coach Nils Liedholm and all Lazio's office, playing and coaching staff.

Re Cecconi had been with Lazio since 1972. They signed him from Foggia, where he played 74 games in *Serie A* and *B* after making his initial impact in the third division with Pro Patria. His death followed that in November of ex-Lazio coach Tommaso Maestrelli.

As for Tabocchini, he was arrested on a manslaughter charge, but a magistrate decided there was no case to answer.

The LESLIE VERNON column

Why c English bridge

WHILE IT is all quiet on the international front, there is a good opportunity to take a critical look at our domestic scene. The picture is not bright, but neither is it as gloomy as habitually described by pundits who hardly ever bother to watch a football match. Ian Wooldridge of the Daily Mail is the latest recruit who seldom misses a chance to aim a mistimed, ill-informed salvo at soccer.

"I know from bitter experience," he wrote recently in his study, which must be stuffed with awards and plaques signifying his journalistic excellence, "because I was a football reporter for six years." For six whole years — imagine!

Wooldridge omits to mention that it must have been around the turn of the century when he so bravely dispatched reports from the windswept press boxes of England and perhaps even Wales. Since then, of course, he watches T.V. occasionally, so he feels entitled to comment on contemporary football. Mind you, while covering a car-rally or such-like in Brazil recently, he discovered that Garrincha has an illegitimate son in Sweden — not many of us can claim a scoop of such magnitude. I guess Mr. Wooldridge will get an award now for "investigative sports journalism".

And now on to the England team — a veritable thorn in everybody's side. The trouble is, obviously, that they are not winning. Under Revie, they have entered four tournaments — lost three of them (European Championship, Home Championship, U.S.A. Tournament), and are on the brink of disaster in the World Cup. In an era when winning is the sole purpose of the game, this is a disastrous state of affairs, and it is small wonder that advice, criticism and comment from all quarters are freely (or at 22p a time if it's in the "Sunday Times") available to Don Revie.

Following the Italy match, most commentators came to the conclusion that we are "not good enough" because we haven't got world class players. Revie denies this, saying that England does have several outstanding footballers, but, for some unaccountable reason, they cannot reproduce their club form. The answer is so simple that it defies explanation why it hasn't yet been discovered by the multitude of professionals (coaches, players, gatemen at grounds etc.) who claim exclusive knowledge in such matters.

Our players cannot reproduce their club form because in internationals they face a *different* kind of player. Not just people who had the misfortune to be born somewhere else, but people who speak a different language with their feet. Their approach to football, their mentality, physical training, concept, are not the same.

There is no point in preparing an England squad to slaughter Finland as though they were playing an English Third Division side. The Finns don't read Jeff Powell every morning, they don't know what a great tactician Revie is, and how many world-class players we have to leave out, because according to the silly FIFA regulation, only 11 geniuses are allowed on the pitch at the same time.

Consequently, the Finns came to Wembley unwilling to conform to the prescribed pattern dreamed-up for them by the English press. Similarly, the Italians, the Germans and practically every other nation have their own concept, determined by national characteristics, climatic conditions, food, tradition etc. If I go to a Chinese restaurant, I am not surprised that chop-suey doesn't taste like roast beef. Strauss couldn't have written those waltzes in Bradford, and the Taj Mahal would be out of place in Sunderland.

If we accept that football is an art form, then it is logical that it should have an individual national flavour, and only players of exceptional ability and intelligence can bridge the gap.

That's why I believe that England must be faithful to her own traditional style, but not quite so blindly as Michael Hart does. In his article in the "Evening Standard", Hart expresses many people's deeply felt suspicion of individuality when he writes: "The day of the entertainer is over. If we are to capitalise on the slim chance we retain of qualifying for next year's World Cup, Revie must build a team based on England's traditional football qualities — strength, courage and character."

Major spectacle

No Sir, when the day of the "entertainer" is over, the raison d'etre of football as a major spectator sport will be dead! The public might be primarily interested in results, but they still flock to see Best, Cruyff, Bowles and their fellow artists.

An often quoted Hungarian football proverb says: "A team must contain people who can carry a piano, and others who can play it!" How many customers would pay good money to watch some toughs carry a piano? But to hear the "sound"...

Is it a mere coincidence that Beckenbauer was elected European Footballer of the Year, and that Rensenbrink came second? Are they artists or artisans? Okay, we play too fast in this country, and our players rush around like computerized robots, because our coaches think that is what the paying public wants. But surely room must be found for the touch players, the guys who might, just might, do something unexpected.

can't players the gap?

"They are not fully committed," goes the popular accusation, when one mentions Charlie George or Hudson or McKenzie. Why not? Because they don't waste their energies by chasing after bad passes, or in other futile pursuits, it doesn't mean that they are lazy. (Bobby Moore was also called "lazy" and so was Jimmy Greaves!)

Magnificent side

Which reminds me of a conversation between Bill Nicholson, the then Tottenham manager, and Danny Blanchflower, who was the captain of that magnificent side. Scene. Bill's office after a game won by Tottenham 7-2. Nicholson: "What shall we do about Jimmy Greaves?" Blanchflower: "Why? He scored four goals today". Nicholson: "Yes, but he didn't do any work off the ball". Blanchflower: "So, what do you want him to do? Run his backside off or score four goals? Because he can't do both". Nicholson: "I don't know!" Blanchflower: "I do. You want him to run his backside off and score four goals."

Evidently Revie, who opted for the 'runners' in Rome, would also like to have the best of both worlds. Which is not impossible if we find another Bobby Charlton or a Tom Finney. But as it is, I have come to the conclusion that it doesn't make the slightest difference who plays for England out of the 35-40 equally gifted, but conveyor-belt produced footballers we have in our national squad — the performance will remain the same!

On the other hand, I am glad that Revie has discovered the benefits of playing with a sweeper. I wrote in 1974: "If Leeds wish to fulfil the dreams of their manager (D.R.) the lesson must be learned. They must study the intricacies of total football. Zonal marking must give way to the man-to-man marking system, a sweeper must be used behind the centre-back and not alongside him, and they must incorporate changes of pace and rhythm into their game."

Now, three years later these sentiments have been 'rubber-stamped' by the national team manager as official policy. It just shows that journalists are not the 'village idiots' that they are often made out to be by the football fraternity.

"Italy are still trying to shake-off their fear," was the headline of David Miller's report in the "Daily Express" on the recent friendly between the "Azzurri" and Belgium. Miller is trying very hard to perpetuate the myth that Italians have no stomach for 'the big occasion', and that they shake in their boots when facing an English side.

Trembling with fear

Let's see how this theory stands up in the light of hard facts. Italy have won the World Cup twice, and reached the Final as recently as 1970. In the European Cup, English and Italian clubs have met six times. The score — England 0 Italy 6!

This season, Juventus, trembling with fear, of course, k.o'd Manchester City and Manchester United in the UEFA Cup. And it gives me no pleasure to mention that these same anxiety-ridden, nail chewing Latins, beat England 2-0 in the current World Cup.

Finally, my favourite jests of the month — Have you heard of the team that was so lethargic, that when the trainer put-up the No. 11 card for substitution, the whole side walked-off? And have you heard of the club which sacked its manager, because they lost three consecutive games on the Pools Panel? I wonder which clubs they had in mind. . . .

George Best's return to English football has been as controversial as his departure. KEIR RADNEDGE traces the events which led him to return and the storms he has had to weather since then.

ABILITY STILL EVIDENT

GEORGE BEST has been involved in so many controversies, so many bizarre episodes, that he is 'news' in his own right.

It matters not what he does — the fact that his name is George Best is enough to make headlines. This is as true now as it has been virtually throughout the length of a career born of limitless potential and drawing to a close in infamy.

From the start he posed problems — running home to Belfast just two days after being brought to Manchester in 1961. Yet four short years later, Best was an established star with champions Manchester United and in 1966 turned on an unforgettable display as United went to Lisbon in a Champions' Cup tie to crush an astounded Benfica 5-1.

It looked just one stepping stone on the way to a place among the all-time greats — in fact it was one of the twin peaks of his career. Two years later he scored the goal in the first minute of extra time when United beat Benfica at Wembley to take the Champions' Cup. But already United and Best were on the way down.

Bill Foulkes — one of the original 'Busby Babes' and a Munich air crash survivor — later pointed out the trouble: that United's rebuilding should have begun a year *before* the European triumph.

Instead, an ambition fulfilled for manager Matt Busby and Bobby Charlton, United lost their direction. Wilf McGuinness and then Frank O'Farrell could do little to restore it and though Best became more and more the guiding light, his example was hardly an ideal one to the new youngsters around him.

Indeed, his first expulsion came only a few months after the European win — in the second leg of the world club cup final at Old Trafford against Estudiantes de la Plata of Argentina.

Two years later he hit another brief peak, scoring six times in United's 8-2 FA Cup win over Northampton, but one more year and he was starting to play truant. All sorts of excuses were advanced by his admirers — pressure of business, loneliness in his £30,000 goldfish bowl of a home, nightclubs, girls — and in 1972 he announced his retirement, at 25!

A brief return proved merely that he had been right to quit. Yet, if anything, he just became more notorious. He played a couple of games in 1974 for Southern League Dunstable, but the next year even United gave up all hope and officially released him.

Best was now a free agent, free to try another minor comeback. For £500 a game he played three matches for Fourth Division Stockport and then three more in Ireland with Cork Celtic.

It didn't work out. Best decided to pack his bags and employ what remained of his reputation in the North American Soccer League. So, a year ago, he joined Los Angeles Aztecs convinced that English football was a part of the past.

But Best reckoned without two developments. The first was the fact that outside the soccer fraternity in the States, no one knew him. The pressures of being a public figure vanished and he began to enjoy his football again. Then, secondly, came the influence of the latest of a string of girlfriends.

She was 24-year-old Angela MacDonald-James, an English model and by mid-summer she was hinting at marriage and Best was thinking of a reconciliation with English soccer.

Also, Best still had one ambition to fulfil — he had never played in the World Cup Finals.

Best's market value increased too when the Aztecs failed to reach the play-off finale to the NASL season. It meant he would return home just a week or two after the start of the British season, fully fit, and ready to step into a League team.

There was one problem. Everyone was scared of taking the risk. Everyone, that is, except three clubs.

One was Arsenal, managed by Best's former international colleague, Terry Neill. Another was Millwall, managed by Gordon Jago, who knew from his American contacts that Best seemed a reformed character. The third was second division Fulham, with a newly-appointed, ambitious executive director in Ernie Clay.

Repatriate

And it was Fulham who got to Best first, and schemed to repatriate him along with Rodney Marsh, the Clown Prince of English soccer, who was also spending his summer in the U.S., with Tampa Bay Rowdies in Florida.

It was said Best would receive £500 a game under a five-year agreement which, taken to its limit, would earn him £125,000. But even Fulham manager Alec Stock was wary.

"I won't believe it until we have him signed, sealed, registered and on the field," said one of the League's most respected men.

His caution was well founded. The League were not prepared to accept Best's re-registration as a formality (And who can blame them, after the amount of adverse publicity he had brought the game?). Fulham and their fans fretted with impatience as Best's return was delayed one week, then two.

League secretary Alan Hardaker came under a lot of popular fire before finally Fulham's chairman, the 67-year-old comedian Tommy Trinder, set off in a chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce for Hardaker's office at Lytham in the north-west and pushed the necessary paperwork through.

The next Saturday Fulham's gate doubled from its average 10,000 to 21,000 to see Best make his debut — and score the only goal after just 71 seconds — against Bristol Rovers.

All the skill, vision and shooting power were still there. Perhaps the explosive acceleration was missing, but that would start to return as Best and Marsh proved the biggest influence on attendances in years. He scored a brilliant goal in a League Cup win at Peterborough and Fulham drew 26,000 for the visit of promotion challengers Wolves.

Blanchflower duly included him in the Northern Ireland team who achieved a remarkable 2-2 draw away to mighty Holland in the World Cup qualifiers. But . . . the idyllic period was at an end.

On September 25 Best was booked for the first time since his return. A week later, as Fulham crashed 4-1 to Southampton, he was sent off for insulting the referee after a 66th-minute tangle between team-mate Bobby Moore, the ex-England captain, and Southampton's FA Cup Final hero, Bobby Stokes.

Impeccable

That meant Best missed the League Cup replay at Bolton the following Wednesday and in his absence not only were Fulham beaten, but the normally impeccable Bobby Moore was sent off into the bargain.

Boardroom unrest developed at Fulham, the sagacious Stock was ousted shortly before Christmas and the team embarked on a long losing run.

At the turn of the year, Best's registration came up for review by the League, and to Fulham's disgust there were strings attached — namely, that Best had to play out the season with Fulham, instead of returning early, as he planned, to the Aztecs.

As if that wasn't enough, he was named as one of the investors who lost money in the collapse of an Irish trust bank!

Yet despite all this, at 30, the genius for football pure and simple remains. The last game I saw him in was Burnley's visit to Fulham in mid-January. It was a match between two teams struggling to escape the second division relegation zone and playing like it.

There were 8,000 spectators. The crowd novelty had gone — at least as far as Fulham were concerned. The miracle hadn't happened. Their team still disappointed, and were fortunate to snatch a 2-2 draw with a goal in the dying minutes.

But through it all, the brilliant, instinctive talents of the Irishman shone out.

What was a player like this doing in a game like that?

News from France...by ANDRE DUCLOS

PLATINI TO MOVE?

WILL MICHEL PLATINI, the brightest new star of French football, be joining Paris Saint Germain at the end of the season? M. Hechter, president of the Parisian club, which has had wonderfully encouraging support for its more attractive games, made a public announcement to the effect that he would, if Nancy did not finish well enough in the League to be involved in European competition. But when the president of Nancy, M. Cuny, came back from holiday, it was to pour . . . not quite cold, but let us say tepid water on the idea.

It was true, he admitted, that Paris St Germain had been given first refusal, in the event that Nancy did not do well in the Championship, did not generate sufficient support, did not go into Europe, but as things stood at the moment, the signs were that they would do quite well enough to fulfill all those aims.

It does look, however, that, Platini being willing, Paris might well be seeing the excellent young forward cum midfielder in the none too distant future.

Let us hope, in the meanwhile, that Liverpool on March 2 will be seeing Dominique Rocheteau. Just getting back to his most devastating form, the brilliant young right winger was given a nasty kick on the back of the leg by a Bastia defender — an ex-Saint Etienne man, as a matter of fact — in a league game late last January, injuring him so severely that his presence in the first leg of the European Cup quarter final was put in doubt. After this Rocheteau complained with much bitterness and some justice that referees do not give forwards sufficient protection in the French League; but then I believe that you have also heard that complaint periodically in England.

Impossible

A successful switch this season has been made by the tall, blond Lens player, Marcel Leclercq, now doing so well as a sweeper. Last season, such a move would have seemed impossible. He was playing with Bousdira and Elie in a lively midfield which, as he admits, was a great deal more preoccupied with attack than with defence.

Then Lens bought the defensive half-back for midfield whom they needed, their former player Richard Krawczyk, and Leclercq dropped back into the defence, with extraordinary success. Needless to say, he is always ready and eager to break out into the midfield, there to do something constructive. In 1968, a shy youngster, he played in midfield for the French junior international team along with the precocious little Serge Chiesa.

Much less happy about playing in midfield than is Leclercq at playing behind it is a footballer whose name may send a shiver down English spines, Domarski. After negotiations that stretched on for a year, at long last he signed this season for Nimes who, with some perversity, decided to put this centre-forward, the man who scored Poland's vital goal against England at Wembley in 1973, into midfield. Plaintively and perhaps not altogether accurately, Domarski has complained that where in Poland the clubs play with five forwards, in France it is customary to play with two. Operating in the midfield, he finds that the play simply tends to pass him by. It is odd that Nimes should want to put him there at all.

Pokou back for Reims?

BY THE time you read this, I sincerely hope that Laurent Pokou, the Cameroonian centre-forward whom I mentioned in my last article, will be back again and shining in the Rennes attack. He has had a dreadful time of it, ever since that November day in 1975 when he was in violent collision with Oleinik, the goalkeeper for Chateauroux, and smashed up his knee. The first operation performed on it was not a success, and understandably Pokou is still bitter about it. He feels it should have been entrusted to a more senior man, one more expert in athletic injuries.

So another operation became necessary and the surgeon, a man who does not beat about the bush, replied to Pokou's questions that he had no better than a fifty per cent chance of playing again. Pokou is not only a player of immense talent but also one of huge determination.

He has had hydrotherapy, he has worked diligently since his return to Rennes to make sure that his muscles did not atrophy. If anyone deserves to get back into football and to stay there, it is Pokou, who has boldly said that merely getting back is not enough; he intends to excel as he has always done in the past. Again, one must say how ironic it is that this should happen to him, and in a Second Division game at that, after all the years he spent turning down the leading French clubs.

It was good to learn that another foreign centre-forward who broke a leg, Argentina and Reims' Carlos Bianchi, is playing so well again that Menotti, the team manager of Argentina, is talking about bringing him back for the World Cup; together with only a couple of Argentinian "expatriates". At the halfway stage, Bianchi, who had the wretched luck to break his leg, of all things, in a friendly game, in Paris, had actually scored fifteen of the twenty-eight goals scored by his club!

You may remember that Bianchi, perhaps with some justice, is quite against the idea of Total Football, believing that specific players have specific talents. It is certainly hard to think of this powerful and determined Argentinian as anything but a goalscorer, and it would be a fitting crown to his career, were he to go home to take part in a World Cup. I do not think he would let Argentina down.

Oswaldo Piazza, the splendid Saint Etienne centre-half, is another of the three Argentinians named by Menotti. I need hardly expatiate to you, who made acquaintance with him last May at Hampden, either in the flesh or on the television, on his immense verve and versatility. Liverpool will certainly find him a very hard man to pass; and a pretty hard man to stop, when he sets off on those powerful, driving runs of his into the attack.

Hospital spell for Zamora...

A HAPPY new year for Ricardo Zamora, the 77-year-old once rated the world's greatest goalkeeper, who is recovering at home after a lengthy spell in hospital. Zamora who conceded 40 goals in his 46 internationals despite that 7-1 defeat at Highbury in 1931, was transferred for a world record when he moved from Barcelona to Real Madrid in 1930. The fee? — £10,000.

Schön happy with his team

West German team manager Helmut Schoen.

WEST GERMAN football finished the year 1976 in a blaze of glory. Close on European Cup winners Bayern Munich clinching the world club championship, their captain Franz Beckenbauer was elected "European Footballer of the Year", for the second time, incidentally. Further honours were claimed by internationals like Rainer Bonhof, Gerd Müller, Berti Vogts, Dieter Müller and Jupp Heynckes, who all received votes in this, the largest annual poll conducted as usual by the French weekly sports paper "France Football".

In addition, the "European XI", as selected by 70 international journalists for the Yugoslav paper "Sport" of Belgrade, included four German players: Vogts, Beckenbauer, Bonhof and Gerd Müller. To cap the accolades showered upon individuals, the West German national team was also voted in as Number One in Europe by a consortium of experts acting for the prestigious News Agency ISK (Internationale Sport-Korrespondenz).

The Germans themselves were far more modest. In their assessment the country's largest and most authoritative sports paper "Kicker-Sportmagazin" named only four players as world class: Beckenbauer, Vogts, Maier and G. Müller. Of course, the paper adds that their ranking only covered performances over the past six months.

I must agree strongly here, that when the description "world class" (showered in England like confetti on their own overrated players) is used, then it should only apply to men who would be chosen for a World XI now. So there cannot be more than 11—17 world class players around the globe to qualify for that distinction.

The international scene is very much in the news just now, following an illuminating interview given by West Germany's national team manager Helmut Schön.

"The fact that we have again reached the final round of the European Championship, then the semi-final victory against Yugoslavia by 4-2 after extra time and above all the 2-0 win over Czechoslovakia in Hannover, these were the most pleasing aspects of the year," enthused Herr Schön. And the greatest disappointment? "The defeat in the European Final in Belgrade against the Czechs. That especially, because it came after a penalty contest. One must have luck in football."

Apart from that fatal penalty miss, the Germans did not lose a game in 1976. Since they won the World Cup (1974) his charges only suffered one defeat — against England at Wembley by 0-2.

Schön explains: "After our triumph in Munich we had to overcome the retirement from the side of such stars as Gerd Müller, Overath and Grabowski. Nevertheless, we have managed to get over it and did not decline as our results in the European Championship have proved. We are now again in a strong position, if we can build on that good performance against the Czechs most recently."

Schön was then asked: You have to rely on the clubs to supply you with players. How is your relationship with the club managers?

Answer: "I am very pleased that all managers are so co-operative and that their work is fruitful, is shown by the results of our club sides in international competitions. I rely above all on the club coaches when it comes to the physical preparation of the players and in this respect I have no worries at all."

Question: How far have you progressed in your build-up for Argentina by comparison with the same period before the last World Cup?

Answer: "Basically we are now at the same encouraging stage as we were then. We intend to extend the size of our squad just as we did last year and are pleased especially to have found in Rummenigge a most promising newcomer."

Q: In the early summer you are going to tour South America as part of your preparations for the World Cup. How important is this trip and those test matches?

A: "I am pleased that I shall have a larger squad of players together for a considerable length of time. In four internationals I should be able to experiment and to find the right blend".

Q: What do you wish yourself in the New Year?

A: "I hope that the selected players avoid injury. And that we can maintain and improve on the form shown recently against Czechoslovakia. But I cannot rule out any setbacks, especially when new players are called up."

Q: Argentina will see your last World Cup activity. With you there will be several pillars of the national side also retiring in 1978. Are you worried that when, for instance, Franz Beckenbauer hangs up his boots there will be a gaping hole in the side?

A: "It will be a long time before a man is found to replace Franz Beckenbauer. Such personalities leave of necessity a painful void. I have already experienced similar problems with the retirement of Uwe Seeler, Gerd Müller and Wolfgang Overath. But one has to make the best of what is left at one's disposal. When, for example, there is no dominating schemer available, then such duties must be spread over three men in midfield."

News from West Germany by Arthur Rotmil

BAYERN PLAY THEMSELVES

IN WEST GERMANY the First Bundesliga clubs enjoyed a brief holiday over Christmas and the New Year and resumed their programme with the Fourth Round of the Cup. The most astonishing pairing was that of Bayern Munich with . . . their own amateurs! This section of the club acts of course as a nursery for the senior side.

In the previous round Bayern's amateurs caused a sensation by eliminating the leaders of the Second Bundesliga, VfB Stuttgart! The match between the teams from the same Munich club was a strange affair — the pros did not exert themselves too much, while the amateurs fought like furies, but to no avail. 5-3 was the rather narrow score line, with Gerd Müller enjoying himself hitting four goals. When Bayern were hit by injuries, a week later, they fielded a couple of these same amateurs, whom they opposed in the Cup, in Bundesliga championship matches!

The big surprise of the Cup round was that for the first time no fewer than three Second Bundesliga clubs reached the quarter-finals: *Bayer* Uerdingen, FC Nürnberg and Bayreuth.

Operations

In the championship the first round after the restart brought a defeat for title holders Borussia Mönchengladbach — 2-3 at Duisburg, but it didn't affect their leadership. Borussia were also badly hampered by injuries with Vogts, Danner and Heynckes still not fit after the various operations.

Bayern Munich too, have suffered a terrible blow when Gerd Müller, who for weeks had been in pain, simply could not put off his operation on badly strained ligaments any longer. He will be out of action for at least two months and thus miss the European Cup quarter-finals v. Dynamo Kiev on March 2 and 16.

At the time of his temporary exit Müller was heading the Bundesliga scorers' list with 20 goals from 19 matches. Closest challengers, with 15 apiece, were his namesake Dieter (FC Cologne) and Klaus Fischer (Schalke), perhaps the best centre forward and the natural successor to Gerd in the national team. Only the fact the Fischer was involved in that famous bribery scandal has forestalled his selection so far. Now that he has served his suspension and the affair has been officially closed, the soccer fraternity is awaiting the decision of the national manager on Fischer with eager anticipation.

Three Bulgarian defenders (white shirts) attempt to halt the progress of Turkey's Erol (dark shirt).

GALLIS SCORES GOALS

IN JANUARY the Czechoslovakian national squad spent two weeks at Zeist in Holland, playing mostly against inferior amateur opposition, but with everyone playing or training every day. The two most significant results were a 0-1 defeat against Belgian side Royal Antwerp recompensed by a crushing 6-1 win over Dutch First Division side FC Den Haag who are boosed these days by former Spartak Trnava coach, Anton Malatinsky.

Dusan Gallis, the VSS Kosica striker who headed a spectacular goal to beat England but has been out of favour ever since, was included in the party and scored goals. But his league form this season — only four goals in 15 games — hardly suggests he is at his best, though he gets a boost from being taken to Zeist.

The problem facing national boss Vaclav Jazek before the vital game away to Wales are hardly decreasing. With captain Anton Ondrus suspended, his co-central defender Jozef Capkovic now seems certain to need a cartilage operation. With goalkeeper Ivo Viktor having a recurrence of his back trouble and maybe even being forced to quit altogether and right back Jan Pivarnik not yet fully fit after his knee operation, the defence has been more than decimated.

Vaclav Jazek.

Bonev builds

HAVING BEEN recalled to the Bulgarian national team (sacked following the wretched performance in the 1974 World Cup), Christo Bonev is clearly trying to build a new young team. He sent a 'B' squad to play Brazil, and playing defensively they made life difficult for the South Americans who could only win 1-0 but it couldn't have helped him discover the goal strikers he so badly needs.

Apart from the World Cup games with Eire and France, the Bulgarians this year have only Balkan Cup games against Turkey and Greece (home and away) planned and this will be supplemented by games against club sides. Youngsters predominate in the squad for 1977 recently announced by Mladenov but he has had second thoughts about axing midfield general Christo Bonev. With 90 caps behind him, 37 as captain the new record international seemed at the end of the road when he was omitted in the autumn. But with Voinov (Levski) Tzetkov (Slavia) and Milanov (Levski) still the major strikers who have failed so often, Bonev has been brought back, partly to help the youngsters and probably because his curled shots and free kicks from midfield match the scoring record of any striker at international level the Bulgarians can field. Bonev's tally in internationals is 45 goals.

TOPLAK IS TOPS

THE new Footballer of the Year in Yugoslavia is left back Dzemal Hadziabdic of Velez Mostar, not to be confused with the left back of the same name who won caps in the seventies and is now playing in Belgium.

Ivan Toplak, the national boss who took on the job for 'only two games' in the autumn, has been persuaded to see out the World Cup qualifying campaign. Presumably he changed his mind when Yugoslavia were reckoned to be very unfortunate not to take at least one point from the away game with Spain who won 1-0 with a penalty minutes from the end.

Toplak is currently in South America with a home based selection, seeking new talent to play with the long list of emigrant stars he can draw on. They started with a 1-0 win over Colombia in Bogota (Dusan Bajevic of Velez) but crashed by 1-5 to Mexico in Leon when Toplak made changes. He still has four more games on the tour before the league campaign resumes and after that has two games in March, two in April, and one each in May and June. Then for the first two weeks in July he goes back on tour to meet amongst six South American opponents, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay.

End of an era —Smith

Steve Heighway of Liverpool, a great admirer of Tommy Smith.

by ERIC THORNTON

THERE will be an extra touch of sadness for thousands at the end of this season because the great Tommy Smith, of Liverpool Football Club, has at last decided to call it a day.

The occasion is to be specially marked by a match between the Anfielders' league championship squad and the full Welsh international team in a final warm-up before tackling Czechoslovakia, in the next stage of the World Cup.

That will certainly provide a considerable backdrop for a testimonial to a man who has, after all, completely devoted a soccer lifetime to an outfit which originally claimed him from schooldays.

I'm prepared to take the odds right now on the attendance that night being far greater than the big majority of England's senior clubs attract to their own games at any part of the season. It will be no less than 40,000, whatever the weather.

Servant

And why not when it is going to be a tribute to a top personality and a faithful servant. I remember organising a benefit for Bert Trautmann in the '60s, and almost 47,000 rolled up to Maine Road to ensure that the great German goalkeeper was given a golden handshake of almost £10,000, and that was real money, those days.

Tommy, of course, is the delight of every true scouser. For he was Liverpool born, bred and educated, then coached and trained up to England standard until he has become, as it were, part of the furniture.

His story could be a winner for Rover. Because no boy could expect a greater hero. Especially as it all began with a quiet knock on the office door — and there was Mrs Smith with the 15-year-old son and heir, and apple of the maternal eye, saying, ever so quietly, to manager Bill Shankly: "Look after him, please."

Glancing back to that period, Shank, who has seen it all, says: "He was a winner right from the start, a first-class learner and a competitor who was not really hard but just didn't want to lose."

Tribute

Bob Paisley, who played an important supporting role in shaping Tommy, before taking charge of the club says: "He typifies the Liverpool spirit, and probably the best tribute is that he has always been a great pro, and always given 100 per cent."

No less a person than Steve Heighway, presently one of Anfield's stars, adds a personal note recalling being "bawled out by Smithy whenever anything went wrong, and he never minced his words."

It's fair to say that this iron man of defence has made a very considerable contribution to the game. Which is hardly surprising in nearly twelve years at the top, during which period he's worn an England shirt and picked up three championship medals, two FA Cup medals, and, for good measure, a further couple for EUFA triumphs.

The retirement announcement may have surprised some of the fans, but the subject himself admits it has been under consideration for some time, and was finally decided after returning from playing in the United States, last year.

Requiring clarification about the future, he talked with the boss, then recognised that first-team days might be limited, and wisely thought it would be best to finish on a high note.

Over the years, he has watched Liverpool teams broken up gradually and new ones take over, and former stars such as Ian St John, Ron Yeats, Gordon Milne, Roger Hunt and Tony Hateley move on, some having a go in hot seats elsewhere.

It wouldn't surprise some of his friends if there was a change of heart after another summer in the American sunshine, but I would very much doubt whether Tommy Smith would fancy another club after playing nearly 600 games for just one!

Alan Hudson of Arsenal (second player from left) in action against Coventry City at Highbury.

GENERALS— ARE THEY OUT OF DATE?

by Brian Glanville

IN ITALY, the controversy continues to rage. Is the general, the midfield schemer, the *regista*, as they call him there, out of date? When I spoke to Nils Liedholm, the former Swedish international who is now Roma's manager, last December, he told me he felt that such was the pressure these days on midfield players that the creators should come from the back four: and certainly his argument is given point by the immense success, as a playmaker, of Franz Beckenbauer, lurking behind the defence as sweeper, but always ready to emerge from his lair.

The Italian critics of the schemer feel that he is obsolete, that so to speak, every player should carry a field marshal's or a general's baton in his knapsack. In the case of Total Football, this tends, up to a point, to be true, but I always urge the example of Wim Van Hanegem, for me the best Dutch player in the 1974 World Cup Final.

Van Hanegem at that time, and indeed until this season, was, of course, a Feyenoord player. Ajax, with Neeskens, Haan and Muhren in midfield certainly did without a recognised schemer and when they were at their brilliant peak certainly shared the work around, with substantial help from Johan Cruytt, in front of them.

But what was, or is, Van Hanegem, if not a classical, creative, midfield schemer? It would be hard to imagine a player less obviously adapted to Total Football, with its emphasis on pace and fitness and mobility and versatility. Van Hanegem was massive and static. He had, and has, a wonderful left foot, a superb flair for distribution, the ability to strike formidably dangerous free kicks, even a willingness at times to drop back and do a little defending.

Withdrawn

But he is not by any leap of the imagination a Johan Neeskens, an "all-action" player thundering through the game non stop at a stupendous rate. Perhaps if Barry Hulshoff had not been injured, obliging Aarie Haan to drop back into defence in consequence, perhaps if Gerry Muhren, the left sided Ajax midfield player, had not withdrawn owing to family bereavement, Van Hanegem would not have played at all, in which case, I can say only that Holland would have been the poorer for it.

Intrigued, however, by the debate, I spoke about it to a number of British coaches and managers. One of them was Tony Knapp, who used to play centre-half for Southampton and Leicester City. In recent years he has made a very fine job of coaching the Icelandic international team, which actually beat East Germany in Reykjavik in the last European Nations Cup.

Knapp has, when he can get him from Standard Liege, a fine inside-forward, 21 years old, called Sigurvisson. Because Knapp has little faith in his resources, he chooses to play Sigurvisson just in front of his back four, where he can pick up short passes and generally get the show on the road.

Had he his way, he would use Sigurvisson much farther upfield, making use of his powerful, two footed shot, dangerous from anywhere up to thirty yards. "There is *room* for them," Knapp concludes, speaking of schemers, "but I think they're luxury players unless you have the right balance in the right team. They've got to be in good sides."

I put the same point to Tony Currie, the inside-left for whom Leeds United paid Sheffield United a huge sum in the close-season. "They play a different game over there (in Europe)," he said, "and I think everybody gets involved. They're skilful enough to do without it. (*A schemer.*) I think you've got to have a midfield general in an English team. . . . The Italians and the Continentals seem to be more skilful on the ball."

MAZZOLA TO QUIT?

by Keir Radnedge

SANDRO MAZZOLA, at 34 captain of Internazionale, will soon be making up his mind on whether to retire at the end of the season.

There are two sides to the argument. One is that president Ivanoe Fraizzoli sees Mazzola's future in a position of authority in the club. On the other hand, several of his fellow directors are trying to convince Mazzola that he is playing too well to quit.

Fraizzoli has already asked Mazzola to decide.

"Mazzola is bound to reply soon," he said. "But he won't become patron of the club. I can rule that out. All the money stays in my hands. But I'd like to give him as much responsibility as possible."

"Whether he wants to be general manager, rector or presidential counsellor is up to him. He's already working hard in our juniors sector."

Fraizzoli has come round to the view that it's only with youngsters that Inter can re-establish themselves. Perhaps he's beginning to wonder if he was too hasty in dismissing Luis Suarez 18 months ago, for Beppe Chiappella has maintained similar policies with equally unpredictable results.

At least Chiappella can claim credit for the explosive emergence of striker Carlo Muraro, the 21-year-old who has earned fulsome praise from Stefano Nyers, the Hungarian left-winger who starred with Inter in the fifties.

It was in the game against Napoli, in which Mazzola celebrated his 400th league appearance, that Muraro suddenly made a name for himself, hitting two goals in the 3-2 win. The next Sunday he took a hat-trick off Roma and a week later scored twice in the 5-1 thrashing of Bologna — the first time Bologna had conceded five at home in 26 years.

Those results were enough to take Chiappella's mind off the Mazzola affair. The coach too, has his opinion. He hopes the play-on lobby win through, since he needs Mazzola as a player but doesn't get on well enough to welcome Sandro appointed over his head.

In the meantime AC Milan stagger on from one crisis to another, with coach Pippo Marchioro powerless to arrest the decline.

Gianni Rivera is still playing brilliantly, but it's becoming more and more clear that in the early seventies there was no adequate planning on how to replace Cudicini, Schnellinger, Lodetti and Trapattoni. Added to that were the controversial sales of Pierino Prati and Luciano Chiarugi.

Milan's bus recently broke down on the way to the game in Verona. The players had to hitch lifts on to the match, which turned out to be a limp 0-0 draw. One of the generous chauffeurs said later: "If I'd known they would play like that I'd have driven past."

President Vittorio Duina, who was thoughtless enough to boast that he wouldn't quit *even if Milan were relegated* (Perish the thought!) is trying again to dig Nereo Rocco out of his self-imposed exile. Rocco is playing a waiting game. "I've had an offer from Spal as well," he told Duina, intimating that he thinks Milan are now no better than a provincial minnow, "and I'll have to think about it".

All the signs are that Marchioro will be out before the end of the season — in which case it would be the third time in succession they have parted company with their coach in midstream. Milan hit a new low in the 0-0 home draw against bottom of the table Cesena.

That left Milan 11th in the 16-team *Serie A*, with 13 points, two more than relegation zone clubs Foggia and Bologna.

Duina has asked the league if he can cut his players' wages by up to 40 per cent as punishment for the continued failures, but he knows that the real answer is to start again with the youngsters, as Inter are already doing.

Sandro Mazzola (left) with Karl Odermatt of Switzerland.

Alan Hudson, as you might expect, is a great believer in the general. Since his return to London, he has been sharply criticised for hanging about at the back, loitering, if you wish, without intent, and making little impact on the game; much, his detractors say, as he was doing, or wasn't doing, at Stoke. Hudson won't have any of this. "There's so much room at the back, you can run the game from there," he assured me. "That's why we had so much success at Stoke. Once scheming goes out of football, it's going to be eleven against eleven, fighting and tearing away."

He pointed out that when Arsenal acquired Alan Ball they had a fine season and got to the Cup Final. The following season they used him further up the field, he scored a dozen goals, but Arsenal did quite poorly. "I played in front of the back four at Stoke," he said, "and I think that's better than playing sweeper. 99% of the players in the League don't know how to pick you up, they're frightened to come that deep."

Alan Ball isn't quite of the same opinion; he is glad he says "to have a breather now and again, you've got to share the load. The hardest thing is winning balls in the middle of the park, holding it, supporting them, winning it back; you can't play ninety minutes, and that's what I think they mean by sharing the load. . . . That's what it means, rather than one man being the general." Push and run, he says, is in his opinion the right way to play: "One and two touch, you can't live with it."

"Chippy" Brady, that fine little left footed Arsenal player who is now playing with Hudson in midfield after previously playing with Ball, is also of the opinion that there should be a sharing of the burden. He points out that midfield now tends to consist of two "fairly skilful kind of players and one kind of ball winner." But then many of the greatest teams of bygone days have had not one but two inside forwards of great constructive quality. Derby County, in that brief period thirty years ago when they rejoiced in the presence of both Raich Carter of England and Peter Doherty of Ireland were a famous case in point.

Midfield

Perhaps the most interesting answer of all, however, came from the Ipswich Town manager, Bobby Robson, immediately after I'd seen Ipswich win handsomely at home with a midfield consisting of Brian Talbut, John Wark and Roger Osborne; all three lithe, energetic, forceful players, but none of them a midfield creator in the accepted sense.

Did Robson feel that the success of a midfield such as this, which no longer included the injured schemer Colin Viljoen, was more modern and effective than one with a general in its midst? Robson said that he felt nothing of the sort: "I still think Viljoen in the middle of any two out of that three would be a superb player." Viljoen's type of player, he insisted, "will always have a place in football." As he points out, however, "Sixty per cent of the match you haven't got the ball, you've got to get it," so that the general must be flanked by players who will win the ball for him to use.

Cyril Lea, his excellent coach, makes a further point; that the most dangerous midfield schemer is the one who can also get goal side of the man marking him. Hudson, as I reminded him when we spoke, used to be able to do this very well and in this era of Total Football it is not suprising that such versatility is being demanded; the ideal player in this context would be a Johan Neeskens.

Hudson told Tony Waddington, his manager at Stoke, however: "What do you want me to do? Score thirty goals and the team finish well down the League, or play at the back and the team do well?" I suppose if Waddington were to say what he really felt he would answer, "Both." For my own part, I shall never forget some of the goals Hudson scored in his early days at Chelsea. Fully fit, perhaps he could still be something of a Neeskens.

TOO MUCH B INFLUE

REMEMBER PAUL REVERE? He was the great American patriot who, in 1775, rode his horse through the Massachusetts countryside yelling "The British are coming! The British are coming!" Thus alerted, the Americans rose up and proceeded to demonstrate that they no longer wished to live under British domination.

Obviously in those days there was a unanimous opinion that the British presence was a bad thing. Yet here we are, 200 years later, suffering — in soccer, at least — from an oppressive excess of British influence. And not a Paul Revere in sight. Far from it, most people seem anxious to lay out their welcome mat for the British.

Take a look at the North American Soccer League. We have a Welsh Commissioner, we have an Englishman in charge of referees. Ten of the league's 18 coaches are British (11 if you include Eddie Firmani). On the field, the total playing strength is about 40% American, 40% British and 20% others (though some of those "Americans" are in fact naturalised Britishers).

The distribution varies sharply from team to team, from Minnesota which last season was almost exclusively British, to Toronto which did not include any British players. As it happens, those were the two teams that met in the NASL final — but more of that shortly.

The reasons for the heavy British influence are not hard to discern. When the NASL started, in 1967, England was on top of the soccer world, holders of the World Cup, with coaches from all over the world making pilgrimages to Britain to find out the secrets of success.

For that reason alone, it was a logical mecca for Americans seeking advice and personnel. On top of that there was the obvious advantage of avoiding language problems (most Americans can, I find, understand English after only a short while. Scottish takes a little longer).

Opportunists, has-beens and mediocrities

So the NASL was launched with a heavy stock of British manpower. That might not have been too bad had we got the best that Britain had to offer. But we did not. There were only a few people in Britain who really took the American experiment seriously, who really saw all the possibilities.

The majority of those who turned up here fell into three categories: the opportunists, who found the whole thing hilarious but who also saw the opportunity for a trip to America and some easy dollars; the has-beens, whose careers in Britain were over but who sensed the possibility of adding a few more years among the Yanks; and the mediocrities, whose chances of making it in Britain were nil but might be considerably better across the Atlantic — those who hoped to fit the old definition of an expert: "An ordinary guy a long way from home."

Of those who arrived with serious intent, I might single out Clive Toye of the New York Cosmos and Phil Woosnam, now the NASL Commissioner who have, quite justly, risen to the top. Of the majority, most of the original opportunists, has-beens and mediocrities are gone. But what they did was to establish a British connection which makes it easy for more British players to enter the league — too many of them, unfortunately, merely newer has-beens etc.

Their influence has not been a good thing. I am quite certain that we do not now need — if, indeed, we ever did — third division players and third division mentalities. There has been evident in the past an American tendency to genuflect to British accents on soccer matters. It is a deeply ingrained attitude — it must be to have survived all the rather obvious contradictions to its truth that so many British imports have evidenced. At last, I believe, the attitude is changing.

In 1967 England were World Champions. In 1977 they are ... well, how would you classify them? "Nowhere" would not be too harsh a judgment. Why should we listen to what the British have to say? I am not saying that we have nothing to learn — we assuredly have, more than most countries. But we should be paying attention to those countries that are leading the world now. We should be finding out what the West Germans are doing, the Dutch and the Brazilians.

The British style in soccer could pass muster here when that was all that most people were aware of. But what does he of England know who only England knows? As soon as other styles begin to circulate, the English style is exposed for what it is. Crude, unimaginative ... and ultimately rather dull.

This last point is of vital importance here. In England, Halifax vs Grimsby may turn out to be the worst game in the history of soccer, but it will not in any way damage the structure of the Football League or the future of the sport. Indeed, it is quite likely that a majority of the fans at the game, emotionally involved with their team, will be satisfied with what they saw, judging it on considerations that have nothing to do with the absolute quality of the soccer involved.

We cannot afford those sort of games. We have to have as much attractive, exciting soccer as possible. We have to have entertainment. Hence the fringe activities such as dancing girls and marching bands, hence the tie-breakers (not, as Brian Glanville implied last month, to decide the game, but to ensure that we don't get the away team playing defensively for a draw).

Soccer is in competition with four other wealthy, well-organised major-league sports here. To have a chance of survival, we have got to have quality soccer, and we have got to have it consistently. If we don't get that, the alternative may well be pressure towards the sort of gimmicky rule-changing that I — every bit as much as Mr Glanville — find so deplorable.

But the fact has to be faced that in the 1970s there is far too much bad, dull soccer around. I imagine that each country has its own tolerance level for bad soccer. Let us say that in England, some 25% of the games can be rank bad without affecting overall attendance. The general, traditional involvement with the sport, the comparative lack of alternatives for the fans, and the expectation that the other 75% of the games will be worthwhile, will absorb the fan dissatisfaction. But if the bad-game percentage goes up much higher, attendances will begin to fall.

In the United States it has to be understood that our tolerance level for dull soccer is much, much lower — because the average American is not yet in love with the sport. He is not as understanding nor as forgiving as he would be with a sweetheart-sport. He has to be seduced with something attractive. And he has other sports, which may have a stronger emotional hold on him, to turn to if soccer fails to satisfy him.

from PAUL GARDNER in

BRITISH ENCE?

Last season was the first year in existence for the Minnesota Kicks. They set new attendance records virtually every time they played (reaching 49,000 for the semi-final game). It was a *very* English team. In the final it ran up against Toronto — not a British player to be seen there — and was humbled. All the British running and long balls, calmly and easily nullified by the Toronto game of possession and skill and pace-control. The good fans of Minnesota, introduced to soccer by the slam-bang British style, have now seen that there is something that not only looks better, but works better too. How long will they be satisfied with what they have?

Crudity of most of the English matches

And if there were any further doubts about the poor quality of the current English game, they are in the process of being rather neatly resolved. Every week in New York (and in some 13 other major cities throughout the country) we are getting a televised tape of an English "Game of the Week". We are seeing Liverpool and Leeds and Derby and Aston Villa regularly, and it is not a pretty sight.

One is, quite literally, shocked by the crudity of most of the games. Ironically Phil Woosnam was known to be concerned at the televising of these games, fearing that they might present a level of soccer that would put the NASL's own games in the shade. I can't imagine that he is worried any more.

To make matters worse, in New York we have only to switch channels as soon as the English game is over, and we get a one-hour tape of a West German Bundesliga game. The contrast between the two could hardly be more vivid. From England we get hard running, bad passing, constant long balls and high punts (both usually aimless), miserable control, ragged midfield play with ping-pong heading duels and strings of semi-successful tackles. From Germany we have finesse, superb control, marvellous changes in pace and generally cool, cultured play.

Strangely enough, that is one of the advantages of following soccer from the United States. On television we see English, German and Mexican games regularly, plus highlights from the Italian league, and an occasional Greek game, or a tie from the Libertadores. Live, via satellite, we have recently seen the Haiti vs Cuba World Cup qualifying ties, and will have Colombia vs Brazil shortly. And we get a steady stream of touring teams — Zenit Leningrad will be here soon to play Tampa, for example.

One sees a bit of everything and — perhaps more important — one is not overwhelmed by a domestic style to which one feels obliged to be faithful. We have no domestic style. Before we develop one, let us pray for a soccer Paul Revere to warn us of the iniquities of the British.

New York

George Best

HOLLAND BEAT England at Wembley just as West Germany, Sweden, Austria and Hungary have done and temporarily almost everyone accepts the fact that the English game is outdated. Not everyone of course, for whatever happens there will always remain a lunatic fringe who still believe regardless that England are the natural and real leaders of World football.

Once we were the tea
now we are the pupils
Continent
improve,
England..

But before passing from the Holland game let me make just one point. England lost because of two kicks by Jantje Peters. Two kicks, that's all it was. And if you really want to console yourself, you can reasonably argue that defenders were close enough on both occasions to have blocked the ball or that Ray Clemence was a bit slow getting down to both shots and might have saved either of them.

All there was in it were those two kicks which may not have resulted in goals. But if the scoreline had been 0-0 just as it was when the Dutch last came to Wembley with Piet Reizer the old head and Cruyff then at his best, the fact remains that the difference in class between the two sides was there for all to see.

The Dutch had a skilful and intelligent player in every position, while England had triers and runners in abundance, but no one who could play. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that the Dutch back four had as much skill as the England forwards!

But looking back over the years, there was nothing new in the Holland game. No lesson that we should not have learned from many a foreign team who came to Wembley and lost. We have not produced real footballers for many years and the plain truth is that it is up to the Football League clubs to bring up their players to play football with elegance and craft.

Sadly, it has not happened and I do not believe it will happen. Not at least in my lifetime, for all the joy has gone out of English domestic football in which nowadays every game has become a battle . . . and real skill is very hard to find.

Standard

But if we have been lacking in the arts and crafts of the game for a good number of years — Puskas proved it in 1953 and Di Stefano underlined it even further — there were aspects of the game in which the English were undoubtedly better than the rest, better even than Scotland.

The Scots, for example, have seldom been able to find a goalkeeper who is really up to the highest standard, while in England we've had a string of them going back for years. Goalkeeper is one position in which the English have never been found wanting.

Now the position has begun to change — though Piet Schrijvers of Holland was hardly an example of the best in continental goalkeeping.

On the one hand, English goalkeepers are, in my view, in decline and found wanting at the top level . . . while the foreign coaches have put in a great deal of work on their goalkeepers.

Goalkeeping, heading (at both ends) and refereeing were the last three areas in which the English excelled, but the best of the foreigners have even overtaken us in these aspects of the game.

True, Jack Taylor did a fine job in charge of the last World Cup Final, but he was acting on specific instructions from FIFA that what a player intended was not what mattered, but what he did.

Again, the Welshman Clive Thomas sent off two players in the European championship semi final between Holland and Czechoslovakia, but back in England, both referees have been too lax because they amend the laws to suit the English game.

I saw Thomas this season in a match where he clearly decided that he didn't need linesmen. Even with off-sides he decided to play on because the defending side had gained possession and on one occasion he made a really major blunder. During an attack, the linesman's flag shot up for a foul that Thomas couldn't have seen from where he was. From my view in the press-box it was a clear penalty, which I am sure is what the linesman was flagging for. Thomas assumed it was yet another offside and waved play on.

Taylor also displayed his particular traits both before and after 1974. It seemed to me that in his view, a stern look and a hard word from him was more effective than a yellow or red card.

English referees can do well . . . ABROAD, when controlling games between two foreign teams because they apply the laws in the way that the continentals want them applied. I know, because I've seen it repeatedly. When an English official goes abroad, the tackle from behind is an absolute foul and never overlooked. They behave abroad as they did during the very brief 'clamp-down' we saw at the start of the season a few years back.

At that time, even the most notorious hardmen were non-plussed and I remember seeing a Chelsea-Manchester City game in which the defenders were really afraid to tackle because the only way they knew how was to steam in from behind. That day the forwards had it all their own way — which is how the game should be played.

Cut out the physical stuff and English midfield men and forwards would once more be encouraged to hold the ball and try to do things with it. But now, before a central forward player can use his skill he has to be physically strong to stand up to the battering he receives from behind and also courageous enough to *take the kicking* and go on playing.

Two current examples of this type of player are Stuart Pearson of Manchester United and Andy Gray of Aston Villa, while Joe Jordan will also battle. Thus we must have big men up the middle and big men we know from experience are not the most skilled players on the ground.

Cruyff of course is a comparatively little fellow — as was Zoltan Varga who in his Ferencvaros days before he defected, was perhaps the best player Hungary had produced since the late 1950's.

Difference

Big is not good, and it is rare that a big man is also good. But in England and English football you have to be big to be good because you have to fight; you have to be prepared to battle.

Years ago, I remember England hammering Russia 5-0 at Wembley when the major difference between the two sides was that the English goalkeeper could deal with the high cross while the Russian simply couldn't.

In the old days the foreign goalkeepers were very good on the shoot, with safe hands and acrobatic style based on agility training that enabled them to fly about in front of their

HERRERA LEADS

HELENIO HERRERA goes on leading the way. He's just become the first coach in Italy to be granted a disability pension of £200 a month because of the heart attack which cost him his job with Inter in 1974. HH, now 60, has already had to quit at Rimini this season because of a suspension imposed by his fellow coaches. But he's adamant that he won't let being a pensioner stop him trying to make a comeback somewhere else.

by ERIC BATTY

chers — s

tals but ..no!

cage and pull off super saves. But I remember some of the best of them coming to grief in England which was once the graveyard for foreign 'keepers.

Since then, the best continental coaches have realised that they must bring their goalkeepers up to scratch against the high cross and they have done a lot of good work in this area. Sepp Maier of Bayern Munchen for example, is now just as happy dealing with the high cross and the long ball down the middle as any English 'keeper.

Another goalkeeping aspect that is of importance to the England effort is that our goalkeeper is chosen on his performances in the English game. To be selected he has to play consistently well in the First Division. That means of course that he has to be good at dealing with the ball in the air when surrounded by opponents who are trying to get their headers in and are not averse to fouling the goalkeeper.

England goalkeeper Ray Clemence punches clear during the international against Holland at Wembley. Kevin Beattie and Dave Watson (right) are the covering players.

Qualities

But how many times did Holland sling over the hopeful centre that dominates the game in England? More often than not, they played the ball up to feet. Both their goals came this way, and in the second half when, quite rightly they changed to let England come at them and counter attack, they made their break around the half way line with balls played to feet ahead of men running into space. For the goalkeeper it was a different game demanding different qualities.

Though Shrijvers wasn't particularly happy when called upon to deal with high crosses, the Dutch got away with it, just as the Germans and many others have done because their back players have spent a great deal of time improving their defensive heading.

The days when English centre forwards noted for their ability in the air struck fear into the hearts of foreign stoppers are over. The best of them can soak it all up and give nothing away.

Thus we find that in general, the foreign teams have improved their goalkeepers and their ability in the air when dealing with high crosses. They have recognised their weaknesses and worked to overcome them so that now the English, as they found against Italy and Holland, can no longer get by as they did in 1966 by being superior in the air.

English defenders of course are still dominant in the air, but while the foreigners have learned to cope with our efforts they still play the ball up to feet and press their attacks to feet. The West Germans got both their goals in the 1974 World Cup final in this way, just as Holland did at Wembley.

So the foreigners have worked at their weakness and retained their strength, but what have we done in England?

We have plodded on, playing what I call fight-ball and the only way our style is changing is by becoming faster. The top teams today are playing at a speed that is limited only by their physical endurance, while the best of the foreigners are playing on their skills.

Unless, and until we begin to appreciate that skill comes first, second and always we will continue to destroy little teams like Cyprus who succumbed five times to Malcolm Macdonald's ability in the air. But the major countries, led by West Germany and Holland, have improved their weaknesses and left England out in the cold.

Daucik back with Andres

FERDINAND DAUCIK is back in business. Ladislao Kubala's 70-year-old father-in-law has just emerged from retirement to try to keep San Andres in the second division.

Daucil, whose son Yanko played for Real Madrid in the early sixties, was born in Czechoslovakia and coached Bratislava and the national team just after the war when he met Kubala.

They fled Eastern Europe together in 1948 and formed the Rome-based team of exiles, Hungaria.

It was on a tour of Spain that he and Kubala were finally snapped up by Barcelona, and from 1950 to 1954 Daucik led them to the championship twice and the Cup three times. After that he moved to Bilbao, winning the Cup and the Cup-and-league double.

After that came two years with Atletico Madrid, and half a season with Porto before he slipped to more mundane clubs such as Betis, Murcia, Sevilla, Zaragoza and so on. He even spent one summer out in Toronto.

Daucik's last job was with the Valencia club, Levante, in 1974-75. Since then he's been living quietly in Madrid, watching Real the one week, Atletico the other.

FANS STAY AWAY

ATLETICO'S 4-0 win over Real Madrid wasn't the happiest occasion for the winners — about 25,000 fans stayed away in protest at the decision to increase prices.

Each season a club can declare one match for which the set prices don't apply, but many Atletico members felt the increase for this game out of proportion. The cheapest ticket was £5.

Atletico won well with two goals from Ruben Cano, but it kept Atletico in pursuit of leaders Barcelona. As president Vicente Calderon said: "We have won the battle, but not the war."

Calderon missed the game and the fans' protests. Business delayed him in the Canaries.

The cheapest places in Spain are 80p on several first division grounds with the top price usually £10 — though Valencia had a top price of £12 the following week for Atletico's visit and raked in £120,000 from a 60,000 full house!

Cano scored twice more and an extra goal from Eugenio Leal was enough to outweigh the two Valencia goals from Mario Kempes, who still figures high in Cesar Menotti's plans for Argentina's World Cup campaign.

Valencia badly missed sweeper Jesus Martinez and the defeat inspired Heriberto Herrera to splash out £250,000 for 19-year-old Cadiz defender, Manuel Botubot.

Atletico's victory was all the better in that they are without Brazilian forward Joao Leivinha, who returned home to Sao Paolo for an ankle operation and told Brazilian reporters all about the rugged state of Spanish soccer.

"In the first half of the season 15 players in the top division finished up in hospital," he said. "It's so tough that if the FA don't act soon to clamp down on rough play I'll make a formal protest myself."

Atletico's other Brazilian, sweeper Luis Pereira, will be home soon too for the World Cup qualifiers with Colombia and Paraguay on March 9 and 13. Brazil manager Oswaldo Brandao wanted him for the February 20 match in Colombia. Atletico said No.

That day they play Espanol, with Barcelona the following Sunday, and Levsky-Spartak three days later in the Cup-winners' Cup.

These important matches make it all the more disappointing that there is continuing disaffection in the Atletico ranks. Full back Ruben Diaz will return to Argentina at the season's end and both Ramon Heredia and Ruben Ayala are unsettled.

Diaz says: "I'm fed up with continual concentrations, long journeys, injuries and all the rest. After 12 years I've had enough."

Heredia's position is understandable. Pereira replaced him as sweeper and he's not mobile enough to earn a place in midfield. What is strange is that Ayala, the new team captain, wants to go.

Maybe his future is tied up with that of coach Luis Aragones — if Luis goes at the season's end, as seems likely, Ayala may be happy to stay.

One man who has already left the Spanish capital was back recently — Günter Netzer, whose new club Grasshoppers Zurich met Real Madrid in a friendly.

And Netzer wasn't too happy with the public's reaction.

Pleased as he was with the applause his every pass drew, he was upset at the catcalls directed at Madrid, though the Spanish champions won 6-3.

"They shouldn't treat their players like that," said the 32-year-old West German. "The fans are just taking advantage of my being here to jeer their own players, and that won't help confidence."

It was the start of a bad 10 days for Miguel Angel, since Ladislao Kubala followed Miljanic's example and dropped him from the squad of 24 preparing for the friendly with the Republic of Ireland.

"I'll never play for Spain again," said the goalkeeper, but somehow, when the final 16 for Dublin were named, Kubala was seen to have persuaded him to rejoin the squad.

Madrid have the third worst defence in the first division and injury to stopper Gregorio Benito and the expulsion of full back Paco Uria in the 4-1 defeat by Bilbao didn't help.

President Santiago Bernabeu has been having long meetings with his fellow directors and Miljanic. No solutions have been publicly announced, but it looks as if Henning Jensen and Paul Breitner will be on their way at the end of the season.

Jensen of Real Madrid (white) is robbed by Olmos of Barcelona during a recent Spanish League match which ended 1-1.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

compiled by Keir Radnedge

CRUYFF IN THE NEWS ONCE MORE!

THERE IS no way to keep Johan Cruyff out of the news. One moment he is playing like an angel, the next he is arguing like the devil and being sent off for it.

After a year in comparative shadows, Cruyff is back at his best and Barcelona, though they're only one point clear of Atletico Madrid, are worthy favourites for the championship.

Rinus Michels has achieved a great deal in a few months since his return, not the least by taking advantage of some judicious work in the transfer market and using the youth scheme Hennes Weisweiler was building up.

Barcelona have a young team, with nine of the *plantilla* 25 or under — right back Ramos is 25, stopper Migueli 23, sweeper Olmo 24, Uruguayan left back Alfredo Amarillo 23, Johan Neeskens 25, midfielders Sanchez 20 and Macizo 23, and forwards Juan Carlos Heredia 23 and Miguel Mir 21.

In addition they've signed Malaga midfielder Esteban Vigo Benitez. The fee was £300,000 — virtually the same amount guaranteed for Neeskens in the new three-year contract he's signed. Now all we wait to hear is that Cruyff will stay one more year.

He has intimated several times that he will retire next year and it seems unlikely he will quit Barcelona, despite tempting offers from Hamburg, AZ'67 Alkmaar and Ajax.

Still, even Cruyff isn't infallible, as he was only too ready to admit after CFB's 2-1 defeat in the Canary Islands, their first beating by Las Palmas in six years.

Johan Cruyff of Barcelona is sent off during his club's match against Malaga by referee Malero.

Injuries

Cruyff set up the opening goal for Neeskens, but Las Palmas drew level through their 33-year-old skipper German Devora Ceballos. German is Las Palmas' all-time top scorer and this was his 100th goal — though because of injuries it came almost a year after No 99!

Las Palmas also had two goals disallowed before, 10 minutes from time, Cruyff gave the ball away to Miguel Angel Brindisi on the edge of his own penalty box.

He promptly moved the ball on and Carlos Morete hit the winner.

"We deserved a draw," said Cruyff later. "It was my fault we didn't get it."

He made amends the next week, hitting two goals in the 7-0 slaughter of Santander, and a further week on he scored again as CFB achieved a 1-1 draw away to Real Madrid.

Cruyff got another in the 2-1 home win over Malaga, but was also sent off in the closing minutes for arguing with referee Jose Melero. The decision sparked a riot, with a television vehicle being set ablaze, the referee attacked, and windows smashed. Several people were injured — including a number of policeman, as angry fans stoned a protective cordon round Melero.

This was the fourth time Cruyff had been sent off in his career. The first was early in his career after a brush with East German referee Rudi Glocckner. Then, after joining CFB, he was sent off in a friendly in Hamburg and later a league match.

Meanwhile, Espanol, the other Barcelona club, are fifth despite their problems. The first was the broken ankle suffered by Carlos Caszely, and the second the failure of Daniel Solsona to immediately fill the gap.

Solsona, the most gifted Spanish forward, had been out of action for six months after contracting hepatitis and his return was a disaster. Espanol lost 5-2 in Bilbao, 3-2 in the Barcelona derby and 2-0 away to Hercules.

To confuse the situation, midfielder Luis Cesar Ortiz Aquino, having obtained permission to fly home to Paraguay for Christmas, failed to reappear immediately afterwards.

Hospital

It seems he treated himself to a Mercedes for Christmas, and crashed it a day or two later. Though he wasn't hurt, his father — a passenger — ended up in hospital. Ortiz Aquino delayed his return, didn't think to tell Espanol, and collected a £3,000 fine when he turned up.

His arrival came too late for coach Jose Santamaria to put him in against Sevilla and Espanol also had to do without Brazilian Jeremias, whose four recent cautions added up to suspension.

The match was uninspiring — a 0-0 draw with so many stoppages six minutes were added on at the end, time enough for Sevilla to have both Rivas and Yiyi sent off — the first for fouling Solsona, the second for arguing.

Santamaria recast his team. Ortiz Aquino returned and Solsona was dropped for the visit of relegation strugglers Burgos. Despite having Fernandez Amado sent off after 26 minutes, and going a goal behind, Espanol recovered to win 2-1 thanks to a generous penalty converted by left winger Maranon.

The 27-year-old left winger, whose full name is Rafael Carlos Perez Gonzalez, was celebrating his call-up for Spain's squad before the friendly with the Republic of Ireland.

I remember Maranon as an eternal reserve with Real Madrid in the late sixties. After five years in the *plantilla* he spent three years out on loan, then asked for a transfer and joined Espanol. His first season was marred by injury and in his second he vacillated between midfield, the wings and centre forward.

Now, at outside left he's found his true place, and with 12 goals he's also Espanol's top scorer.

ANOTHER trainer with some good news — of a different sort — is West German Hennes Weisweiler, who so upset the applecart at Barcelona. Weisweiler's words will be a big comfort for anxious players in both the Madrid clubs, who feared he might be their next boss. "I won't be going back to Spain," he said in Cologne. "Once is enough. I've plenty to keep me busy here for a few years."

Bayern too good

IN SPITE of their delayed 20-hour air trip which left them no time to train nor get accustomed to Belo Horizonte's climate, European champions Bayern Munich were too good for Libertadores Cup holders Cruzeiro of Brazil in the second leg of the Inter-Continental Cup. The Germans, who had won the first leg 2-0 at home, won the trophy with a 0-0 draw, but they deserved to win . . . and practically every Brazilian said so too.

Bayern Munich were lucky in one respect. Coming from freezing temperatures in Germany, they escaped the worst Brazilian heat. It was only 20° C during the evening match and it rained during the first half (as it had been during the previous few days) — conditions which were more to the German team's liking. But Bayern also showed superior tactics all through and had the better goal chances, so much so that goalkeeper Raul was the Brazilian team's best man.

Cruzeiro, forced to go all out for goals from the start to wipe out the first leg deficit, found it hard to escape Bayern's marking and when they did get through they missed chances through inaccurate shooting and goalkeeper Maier's good stopping.

In the second half specially, when Cruzeiro showed fatigue, Bayern missed the best chances. Rumenigge missed their best chance when he thought he was offside and hesitated for a fatal second before just grazing a post.

Cruzeiro, who seem to be growing old together, lacked sparkle. They disappointed the 114,000 spectators paying a new Brazilian record 530,000 dollars at the gate.

But after the match Bayern Munich officials said that the club would not play for the Inter-Continental Cup again in view of the scant interest in Germany where only 18,000 turned up to see the first leg involving the club in a heavy loss. They also refused to entertain pleas from Argentina's Independiente (the 1975 Libertadores Cup winners) to play the 1975 version of the trophy. Independiente had taken their complaint to the South American Football Confederation, but had received no satisfaction as this is not an official tournament.

AND THE 1977 LIBERTADORES CUP . . .

Meanwhile 17 of 20 clubs had qualified for the 1977 Libertadores Cup at press time with only the two Bolivian representatives undecided as their national championship had not finished.

While Peñarol and Defensor qualified from a final six team tournament in Uruguay and Universidad de Chile won a four team play-off in Chile between the second and fifth placed First Division teams to accompany champions Everton, River Plate beat Huracan 4-1 (with three goals from their controversial international centre-forward Leopoldo Luque) in Argentina in a play-off for the second place between vice-champions of the national championship and First Division.

This year's pre-established draw (with dates due to be fixed at the end of January) is:

GROUP 1: Boca Juniors and River Plate (Argentina), Peñarol and Defensor (Uruguay). GROUP 2: Nacional and Deportivo Cali (Colombia) and two Bolivian teams. GROUP 3: Internacional Porto Alegre and Corinthians Sao Paulo (Brazil), Nacional and Deportivo Cuenca (Ecuador). GROUP 4: Everton Viña del Mar and Universidad de Chile (Chile), Libertad and either Olimpia or Cerro Porteno (Paraguay). GROUP 5: Deportivo Portuguesa and Estudiantes de Merida (Venezuela), Union Huaral and Sport Boys (Peru).

PAST WINNERS

1960 — Real Madrid beat Penarol 0-0, 5-1
1961 — Penarol beat Benfica 0-1, 5-0, 2-1
1962 — Santos beat Benfica 3-2, 5-2
1963 — Santos beat AC Milan 2-4, 4-2, 1-0
1964 — Internazionale beat Independiente 0-1, 2-0, 1-0 aet
1965 — Internazionale beat Independiente 3-0, 0-0
1966 — Penarol beat Real Madrid 2-0, 2-0
1967 — Racing Buenos Aires beat Celtic 0-1, 2-1, 1-0
1968 — Estudiantes de la Plata beat Manchester United 1-0, 1-0
1969 — AC Milan beat Estudiantes 3-0, 1-2**
1970 — Feyenoord beat Estudiantes 2-2, 1-0
1971 — Nacional beat Panathinaikos 2-1, 1-1 ***
1972 — Ajax Amsterdam beat Independiente 3-0, 1-0
1973 — Independiente beat Juventus 1-0 ****
1974 — Atletico Madrid beat Independiente 0-1 2-0 *****
1975 — Independiente and Bayern could not agree dates.

** — Change of rules. From this year on result was decided on goal aggregate, not on league/points system with play-off if needed.
*** Panathinaikos stood in for Champions' Cup winners Ajax who refused to compete.
**** Juventus stood in for Ajax in single game played in Rome.
***** Atletico Madrid stood in for Bayern.

WORLD CLUB CUP

First leg: Munich — Bayern 2, Cruzeiro 0
Goals: Müller 80, Kapellmann 82. Att: 22,000. Ref: L. Pestarino (Arg).
Bayern: Maier — Andersson, Beckenbauer, Schwarzenbeck, Horsmann, Durnberger, Torstensson, Kapellmann — Hoeness, Müller, Rummenigge.
Cruzeiro: Raul — Nelinho, Moraes, Osiris, Vanderley — Ze Carlos, Piazza, Eduardo — Jairzinho, Palinha, Joaozinho (Dirceu 80).

Second leg: Belo Horinzonte — Cruzeiro 0, Bayern Munich 0
Att: 114,000 (Brazilian record receipts £360,000). Ref: P. Partridge (Eng).
Cruzeiro: Raul — Moraes, Osiris, Piazza (Eduardo 30), Nelinho — Vanderley, Dirceu (Forlan half-time), Ze Carlos — Jairzinho, Palinha, Joaozinho.
Bayern: Maier — Andersson, Beckenbauer, Schwarzenbeck, Horsmann — Weiss, Torstensson, Kapellmann — Hoeness, Müller, Rummenigge.
Winners: Bayern Munich, 2-0 on agg.

THE 1976 season in Argentina left three controversies in the air: a) whether the practical but poor soccer with which Boca Juniors won both the First Division and national titles is superior to the nicer short passing game with which Huracan just failed both times and which national team coach Luis Menotti tried to instil into his squad with varying success; b) whether Boca's goal scored by captain Suñe to beat River Plate 1-0 in the national championship final was valid and c) what about the future of the championships.

To take the lesser issue first — although it decided a title — Suñe scored from a free kick in the second half when referee Arturo Ithuralde had not blown the whistle and River's defence was not ready and a controversy started.

According to rules, the referee does not have to blow the whistle for a free kick to be taken and he must tell opponents to move back if they are too near the ball only if he is asked to do so by the team taking the kick. Suñe said he did not ask, but in photos taken of the goal, the referee is seen raising his arm as if to send defenders back who are seen walking back towards their goal just as Suñe took the shot.

Both teams were over cautious but Boca, in spite of their poor tactics, looked better organised. After the match Boca coach Lorenzo said that it had 0-0 written all over it and only a bad mistake by either team would produce a goal — and it did, but it may have been the referee's fault as he put River defenders off their guard. But it was not a casual goal. Boca had practiced free kicks hard in training and knew that River were sometimes notoriously slow at forming a defensive wall. Ironically, prior to the match, when the referee called the two captains together, River's Perfumo asked whether they could take free kicks without waiting for the whistle. Suñe listened and remembered. Perfumo apparently forgot.

But the major issue, which could decide the immediate future of Argentine soccer with the World Cup looming up, is which style is best.

It is a well established fact that champions Boca Juniors did not play the best soccer in the national championship. It had been the same story when they won the First Division title earlier in the season. But Boca and their coach, Juan Carlos Lorenzo, know their limitations and never pretended to play good soccer but merely get results. They haven't got the players for anything else — nor, really, had any other team.

Boca's defensive set-up is sound. They played hard and sometimes rough, taking most of the few chances they were able to carve out. It would not have been good enough if the overall standard had not been so low. The continual exodus of Argentina's top players to foreign clubs was bound to tell sometime.

Huracan, for example, often tried to play good soccer and with four current internationals (Baley, Carrascosa, Ardiles, Houseman) one would think they had the players, but they did not have enough of them

Chacarita Juniors goalkeeper Vivaldi grabs the ball just in time as Boca Juniors late goal expert Taverna jumps up to head.

SOUTH AMERICAN ROUND-UP

by ERIC WEIL

● PARAGUAY has a psychologist, Dr Jorge Arestivo, on its coaching staff for the first time to get the players to set their minds on winning. The team looks good and should beat Colombia, but even a psychologist may not be enough to beat Brazil. Paraguay beat Ecuador in a warm-up by 2-0 in Quito and had further matches scheduled against Uruguay, Chile and Bolivia before February's qualifying matches.

Boca controversy

and the transfer abroad of a fifth, Brindisi, during the season, weakened their midfield strength considerably. Earlier, during their 24-game unbeaten run, they often looked really good. Later they were erratic like practically every other team during the 10 months long season.

In fact, teams were even erratic during matches and a case in point are Boca Juniors themselves. They were such poor starters that during the national championship group play they scored only four of their 24 goals during the first half of their 16 matches in which they again got a number of late point saving goals which got them to the final stage. Many other teams showed similar statistics.

The fans had the final verdict as the decline in gates at league matches continued. The fans want to see their teams win, but they also want to see good football . . . but will even more clubs copy Boca Juniors now? River Plate, for example, were only a shadow of the attacking team which won both the First Division and national titles in 1975.

Of the few good players to emerge who are still in the country, River Plate's defender Daniel Passarella, 23, was the most outstanding, not only in defence. His good headers, free kicks and penalty shots also made him the team's leading scorer with 24 goals — an Argentine record for a defender.

Another reason for the poor league soccer is the excessive number of First Division clubs for which there are not enough good players to go round. Next season's championships have been reorganised with the idea of making them more profitable and reducing the number of First Division clubs from 23 to 18 in three years. But reorganisation has also reduced the national championship and the stronger provincial clubs, having to maintain expensive playing staffs, are up in arms . . . and thus ended the 1976 season with another controversy regarding Argentina's domestic soccer.

STATISTICALLY, Boca Juniors became the third club to win the "double" (First Division and national championship in the same season). San Lorenzo (1972) and River Plate (1975) have done it before them.

In spite of their long rivalry since the 1931 start of professional football in Argentina — 110 matches, Boca won 42, River 40, draws 28 — the two clubs had never met in a championship decider before. (Prior final round results, in which the top two teams of each section participated, were: First round: Boca Juniors 2, Banfield 1; Talleres Cordoba 4, Union Santa Fe 0; River Plate 2, Quilmes 1; Huracan 2, Newell's Old Boys (Rosario) 0. Semi-finals: Boca 1, Huracan 0; River 1, Talleres 0).

It was Boca Juniors' third national title, making them leading winners. Previous winners: 1967 Independiente; 1968 Velez Sarsfield; 1969 Boca Juniors; 1970 Boca Juniors; 1971 Rosario Central; 1972 San Lorenzo; 1973 Rosario Central; 1974 San Lorenzo; 1975 River Plate.

Chinaglia of the Cosmos.

NASL set for new term

COLIN JOSE reports from the USA and Canada

WHILE THE World Cup has been attracting almost all of the attention in North American soccer in recent months the North American Soccer League has not been idle in its preparations for the coming season. But in spite of having enjoyed its finest ever season in 1976 the NASL is having some problems lining up its membership for 1977.

Already there have been three franchise shifts with the San Antonio Thunder fading away across the Pacific Ocean to Hawaii, the San Diego Jaws gambling on Las Vegas where they will be known as the Quicksilvers, and the Miami Toros moving up the coast to Fort Lauderdale.

But as fast as the Texas city of San Antonio lost one franchise it chased another. The Philadelphia Atoms, champions in 1973 when they were attracting crowds of over 20,000, planned to move quietly south. But the transfer was squashed and the Philadelphia franchise suspended after a court action was brought to bear.

The NASL schedule also lists the Toronto club as the "Toronto Metros" and not the "Toronto Croatia" as it did last year. This is interesting for the league had always opposed the Croatia name and there was quite a fuss about it at last year's final.

Contract

Also at a time when it was hoped that the NASL had finally got its foot in the lucrative television market when it signed a three year agreement with CBS in the United States last season. The national network has opted out of the contract citing low ratings on the games shown last season including the NASL final.

Oddly enough at the same time that CBS was announcing that soccer had not yet arrived as a television attraction in the United States, up in Canada the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was announcing that it would show 14 soccer games on Saturday afternoons during the summer. Most of these games would be on tape and would include European as well as NASL games.

Region

Also during the long Canadian winter soccer fans in the southern Ontario region which includes the cities of Hamilton and Toronto have not been left out in the cold. CITY-TV a local Toronto station has been showing tapes of West German Bundesliga games on Saturday afternoons, while CHCH-TV in Hamilton has on three occasions this winter shown Italian First Division games live over the satellite.

The German games have had an English commentary but the Italian games have had an Italian commentary. Still with a vast Italian population in the whole of this region, plus fans who will watch any kind of soccer providing it is first class then the Hamilton station is assured of a vast audience.

With the Italian and German games being shown just one day apart comparisons are inevitable, with the German game being far more entertaining.

MEXICO TO PLAY HOST

MUCH AS expected Mexico will play host to the second preliminary round of the World Cup in the CONCACAF area. At the time of the original draw FIFA along with CONCACAF had decreed that the second round should be played in the northern zone, and so Mexico and Canada as the winners in that area were left to negotiate which one would stage the six nation tournament.

The Canadians would have been most happy to play host realising that they would have had an advantage in playing all of their games at home, an advantage that might well have assured them of reaching the finals for the first time ever.

Apparently the Canadians would also have had the support of most of the other five nations for they were very happy with the way in which the Canadian Soccer Association staged the FIFA Congress this past summer, and with the way in which the Olympic Football Tournament was organised.

Soccer in Canada however is hardly in the most affluent financial state and the cost of staging the games in Canada was estimated at in excess of $500,000, for the agreement is that the host nation pays for all travel, accommodation and meals.

Sponsors were sought by the CSA in both the private and public sectors without a great deal of success. One company came forward at almost the last minute with the idea of putting up the money provided that the games would be staged in the Olympic Stadium in Montreal. But in the final analysis an agreement could not be worked out and so reluctantly the Canadians agreed to let the Mexicans play host.

The lure of the Olympic Stadium would undoubtedly have helped in boosting the tournament if the World Cup could have been fitted in between the schedules of the Montreal teams who play in the Canadian Football League and the United States National Baseball League. Both of the Montreal pro teams in these leagues are expected to use the stadium this summer and fall for their home games.

Even so it is doubtful if the World Cup would have enjoyed success similar to the Olympic Football Tournament in terms of attendance for the national teams of Surinam, El Salvador, Haiti, Guatemala or even Mexico are not of sufficient stature to attract the uncommitted fan. In addition there might well have been a protest over the field markings much as there was in Vancouver this fall for it is very difficult to remove markings in artificial turf and the result is a confusion of football and soccer lines.

Of course the cost of holding the tournament in Mexico is not as high as it would be in Canada in view of the distances involved, with Guatemala and El Salvador being virtually next door. This also means that some fans from those countries would swell the ranks in the stadiums, which would in any case contain far more fans than similar games would attract in Canada.

So in agreeing to the staging of the tournament in Mexico (apparently much to the disappointment of some of the other nations) the Canadians may well have lost their chance of going to Argentina, but at the same time staved off financial disaster.

Mexico has announced that the tournament will be held some time at the beginning of October and that four sites are under consideration from which the Mexican F.A. will select three with a view to the marketability of the games.

International Microscope

Swiss have long record

compiled by ERIC BATTY

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals F.	Goals A.
Albania	2	2	0	0	3	0
Argentina	1	0	0	1	0	2
Austria	28	5	3	20	38	85
Belgium	22	7	5	10	32	42
Brazil	2	0	2	0	3	3
Bulgaria	1	0	1	0	2	2
Chile	2	1	0	1	5	5
Cyprus	2	1	0	1	6	2
Czechoslovakia	18	3	4	11	30	51
Denmark	4	1	1	2	6	8
Eire	7	3	0	4	4	8
England	12	2	1	9	10	37
Finland	1	0	0	1	0	1
France	27	10	6	11	51	49
Germany, West	40	8	5	27	54	110
Greece	4	3	0	1	4	4
Holland	27	13	2	12	56	58
Hungary	33	5	2	26	45	109
Ireland, North	2	1	0	1	2	2
Israel	1	0	0	1	1	2
Italy	41	6	14	21	56	89
Lithuania	1	1	0	0	9	0
Luxembourg	4	4	0	0	10	4
Malta	2	2	0	0	7	1
Mexico	3	1	1	1	3	5
Morocco	1	0	0	1	0	1
Norway	7	2	1	4	8	12
Poland	5	1	3	1	8	9
Portugal	11	7	2	2	22	15
Romania	5	1	1	3	11	10
Saar	1	0	1	0	1	1
Scotland	8	2	0	6	10	16
Spain	12	0	2	10	12	31
Sweden	18	8	3	7	30	34
Turkey	8	2	2	4	11	10
Uruguay	2	0	1	1	3	6
U.S.S.R.	4	0	2	2	5	9
Wales	2	1	0	1	6	3
Yugoslavia	7	1	2	4	10	22
Totals	378	104	67	207	574	858

SWITZERLAND WERE one of the first countries to take to football seriously and were amongst the Central European countries that began the International Cup back in the dark days. This is reflected in the fact that they have played Hungary 33 times and Austria 28, and together with games against their neighbours Italy to the south (41), and Germany to the west whom they have played 40 times, accounts for well over a third of all her games.

But the Swiss have been overtaken by events elsewhere and virtually stood still. All her neighbours to the West adopted professionalism long ago, but by the standard of the Schweizer Fussball Bund at least, they remain amateur. What this means in practice is that the players must also have a job outside the game and thus Swiss players get the best of both worlds. The best of them get paid like professionals and yet they train like amateurs, two or three evenings a week after work. This is the formula that has led to the downfall of once mighty Austria.

One could see when they were at their peak, that players like Jakob 'Kobi' Kuhn and Karl Odermatt took the game seriously and trained hard, for they always showed up well against full professional opposition. But the general standard is poor, league games are not really competitive and the average player looks upon himself as an amateur. In the words of the Swiss themselves, football is a hobby, albeit a well-paid one for some.

Although the Swiss have never been beaten in two games against Brazil, the only major country against whom they have a positive record is Holland, who, like themselves, regarded football 'as only a game' until the mid sixties. Against this background, enthusiasm for the game overshadowed by the fact that they played for pleasure, the Swiss have done no better in recent years than they did in the era when the game boomed in Austria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. But under the guidance of one man they repeatedly showed they could match the rest of the world — and that man was the Austrian born Karl Rappan.

Rappan was one of that rare breed to earn the title 'magician', a man with great charm and a deep knowledge of the game who almost lived and breathed for soccer. Without doubt, Rappan was a football-man, born for the game. A whole generation of players have come and gone since Rappan's last miracle, but it is worth recounting that above any one else in Switzerland he had the ability to motivate and inspire his players and lift them to levels no one dreamed they could achieve.

He first showed his ability when he took command of the Swiss team in the period 1937-38, the first of four stints in charge of the national team. In that time, Rappan steered his team to a 2-1 win over England in Zurich and that alone was a miracle. But he followed that by taking his team to France for the 1938 World Cup, beating Portugal, in a qualifying round and drawing 1-1 with Greater Germany. At that time, Greater Germany included Austria and illustrious names from Austria's past like Willi Hahnemann, Hans Pesser and Pepi Stroh all played for Germany. Hahnemann was a real craftsman, I know because I saw him in the twilight of his career and he must have been really something in his prime. But Switzerland beat Germany 4-2 in the replay to reach the quarter finals where they lost 2-0 to eventual finalists Hungary.

Rappan had his second and longest stint with the Swiss national team from 1942 to 1949 but was re-called to perform a second miracle with the Swiss game in the doldrums just 18 months before they were due to play host in the 1954 World Cup.

Playing at home was naturally an advantage, but Switzerland's record at that time suggested they were going to do nothing to write home about. Hence the recall of the magician. In the competition proper, Switzerland had a tremendous 2-1 win over Italy and then in a play off match for a place in the quarter finals had to play Italy again. This time the Swiss triumphed by 4-1 and in the quarter finals they fought a classic battle of wits and skill with Austria who had at the time, players like Ernst Oewirk and Gerhard Hanappi and a really fine team. In a festival of good soccer, the Swiss came off second best, but they gave Austria a real run for their money before losing by 5 goals to 7.

Once more Rappan came back to lead the Swiss to success in the 1962 World Cup, success this time being merely in qualifying for the trip to Chile, which most people thought was beyond them. They won 4-2 away to Belgium, but eventually had to play off against Sweden in Berlin and the Swiss qualified for the trip to Chile with a 2-1 win. There the Swiss finished bottom of their group, but significantly they held West Germany to a 2-1 win.

There are those who argue that Rappan could not work similar miracles today because the state of the Swiss game is so poverty stricken compared with that of her more professional neighbours. Certainly they have been through a lean spell, playing seven or eight games in each of the last three years and recording only one win per year.

But Rappan's achievements have to be taken in the context of the times and he stands alone as the only man to have taken the Swiss game anywhere at all.

News from Hungary by Leslie Vernon

Spot checks for players

THE SCREW has been tightened in Hungary! The F.A. are still not satisfied with the progress made by the clubs, and have decided to introduce even more stringent measures to force the coaches and players to toe the official line.

It has been announced that during the coming season, spot-checks will be made on players, testing their overall physical condition and fitness. If they fail to come up to requirements, their registrations will be temporarily withdrawn and their "allowances" stopped.

In the case of members of the national squad, the "norm" is set higher, and they will be obliged to work 'overtime' in training to improve their combativeness and ball skills. Undoubtedly, these measures are necessary, because despite the flattering European rating of Hungary (third in France Football!), the standard of football remains stubbornly mediocre.

Why? According to F.A. Secretary, Jozsef Krizsan, the clubs are still fond of expediency, they do not plan for the future. The compulsory alteration in the managerial structure is an optical illusion without substance. A respected journalist, Andras Rozsa, writes that "the system of motivation by financial-moral means needs a finer definition. It would be better if the direct allowances would be smaller and performances (results) would be more substantially rewarded."

In plainer language, the players should be given less basic money, smaller wages at their "sport-jobs", but larger bonuses. Increase the size of the carrot, and the donkey will run faster!

On the positive side, one must mention that the game has become infinitely more "honest", there are no pre-arranged results, apart from a few convenient draws when point-sharing is beneficial to both clubs. But even in these cases (and name me a country where such things never happen!) no money changes hands.

Consequently, the goodwill of the public has been restored, and crowd figures show a substantial increase. However, this benevolence doesn't extend to referees, who are more disliked and ostracised in Hungary than anywhere else in Europe. This is totally unfair, even though it is partly due to the overstrict (and illegal!) interpretation of the laws.

Under the chairmanship of Istvan Zsolt (who means well, I hasten to add!) the Hungarian Referees Association have abolished the use not only of yellow or red cards, but the disciplinary measure of "caution" as well. They reasoned that the card system leads to "theatrical" demonstrations, and that a referee should not have the "loophole" to chicken out by merely cautioning an offender who deserves to be sent-off.

Logically (?) they decreed that any form of dissent like gestures, kicking the ball away etc, is a sending-off offence, and so is a tactical foul, when a defender drags an opponent down to the ground. "Bravo" says every true believer in pure football, but . . .

But it goes against the grain to send-off a player who might automatically kick the ball a few yards away when a free-kick is given against him. So the referees often let players "get away with it", while in the same game send someone off for a similar misdemeanour.

"Inconsistent", cries the crowd, quite rightly. I feel, that the referees who are in fact a great deal better than they are given credit for, are in an impossible situation, and that now is the time to revert to the laws of the game, as they are written, using commonsense in their interpretation.

The year of 1977 could be a formidable one for Hungarian football, because during it, they might ensure participation in the World Cup Finals — for the first time since 1966. In order to tune-up the squad for the important qualifying matches, a pre-season Central and South American tour has been arranged. Lajos Baroti, national team manager, took this 18-strong squad with him.

Goalkeepers: L. Kovacs (Videoton), Gujdar (Honved). *Defenders:* Torok (Vasas), Balint (Ferencvaros), Kerekes (Bekescsaba), Kereki (Haladas), Rab (Ferencvaros), J. Toth (Ujpest). *Midfield:* J. Nagy (Videoton), Ebedli (Ferencvaros), Pinter (Honved), Zombori (Vasas). *Forwards:* Pusztai (Ferencvaros), Torocsik (Ujpest), Magyar (Ferencvaros), Fazekas (Ujpest), Weimper (Honved), Varadi (Vasas).

Beneficial

Nyilasi is still not fully fit after his serious head injury — otherwise this is probably the strongest squad at present. We shall see whether the trip will have beneficial effects or whether on return, we shall hear the usual complaints about lack of training facilities during travel, tiredness, tummy troubles and the rest. These are the other international fixtures during the spring campaign:

March 27. v Spain (A).
April 13. v Poland (H).
April 20. v Czechoslovakia (H).
April 30. v USSR (H). World Cup.
May 18. v USSR (A). World Cup.
May 28. v Greece (H). World Cup.
June 17. v Iran (A).

The League season will open on March 5 and will finish on June 11. Six "rounds" will be played-off in midweek, and there will be seven double-headers in the Nepstadion. The "key-match" between Ujpest Dozsa and Ferencvaros is scheduled for May 21 to be preceded by MTK/VM v Honved. All games in the last three rounds must start at the same time — 5 pm in case you wish to catch a plane to see them!

MTK/VM are the only team left in a European competition, and they are drawn against Hamburg SV, in the Cup Winners Cup. The odds are not in the Hungarians' favour, but I said the same before the previous round when they faced Dynamo Tbilisi. Instead of forecasting, it is more pleasant to contemplate that once upon a time, there was a guy called Nandor Hidegkuti who played for MTK, and another named Uwe Seller, who turned out a few hundred times for Hamburg . . .

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Derek Hales, with Charlton manager Andy Nelson, shortly before his high-priced transfer to Derby County.

HAVE BOOTS, WILL TRAVEL

by Eric Thornton

THESE days of fantastic transfer cheques and tremendous bonuses for players ready to pack at a moment's notice and move almost to the ends of the earth are threatening to destroy the old home-loving image we have been cultivating for so many years in all parts of Britain.

It is recognised, of course, that there will always be some, especially teenagers, willing to tolerate the disadvantages of living in suitcases, or being rapidly transported across the globe for sky-high cash benefits.

That has been proved on countless occasions. It was spotlighted sensationally in 1950, with the Bogota exodus of English, Scottish and Welsh internationals. And again, just a few years later, when the Italian sunshine and lira tempted another bunch of top flight stars, including John Charles, Joe Baker and Denis Law.

They all soon returned, however, and probably for the same reason as Law — homesickness. In one letter to me Denis wrote that he and Joe were sharing a flat that was the last word in luxury, *yet almost a prison.*

That was simply because neither boy could understand the lingo, nor read the papers and mags, and they were always surrounded by excited mobs whenever they ventured out for a change. At times, the loneliness was Hell.

Bert Sproston, and earlier soccer traveller, soon hurried back home, though for a slightly different reason. The old England defender missed mother's cooking after being transferred from Leeds United to Spurs, and was unhappy until he'd moved back north.

I know that today we have several expensive exports chasing the almighty dollar, yet there is definite evidence that home surroundings still count with the majority, and in a big way. That's one reason why the transfer market has been relatively quiet, this winter.

Arsenal, a club most players are always eager to join, would be the first to back that view. For Highbury was shaken to its foundations, last year, when a £100,000 deal fell through at the last minute because of Mum and Dad.

Tony Morley was the name that time. This 21-year-old who hails from the potato country around Ormskirk, and was taken to Preston as a schoolboy by Alan Ball senr, snubbed the north Londoners after passing a medical and agreeing his own terms.

The boy wanted better class football. Everton, Aston Villa and Manchester City were ready to provide it. Then Arsenal entered the scene, shook hands with Preston over their offer, and thought it was all wrapped up after Tony had been to see their facilities.

But it wasn't. He didn't want to live in London, and was also against pulling up any roots. So next-door Burnley, an easy trip from Ormskirk, were on a winner when they sized up a bid.

The youngster said afterwards: "I might not have been happy in London, and I wasn't prepared to take the risk, because if that had happened I wouldn't have been playing my best, and, besides, I wanted to stay home."

Peter Dornan is another instance. This 22-year-old Irish League midfield man cost Sheffield United £30,000 when signed from Linfield but, believe it or not, was transferred back in just 26 days.

Dornan, an honours law graduate, said afterwards that within two days of arriving at Bramall Lane he realised that full time professionalism was not for him, and he'd prefer to go home and play the game for fun.

Bristol Rovers striker Alan Warboys, whose transfer valuation has been reduced by the F.A. on appeal, has always fancied playing nearer his South Yorkshire native heath, and there are many others. . . .

Defensor qualify . . .

from ERIC WEIL

IN URUGUAY, Defensor, who this season ended the Peñarol-Nacional domination of the First Division title (since the beginning of professional soccer) won the six-team final round to qualify two teams for the Libertadores Cup by surprisingly beating Peñarol 4-1 in a not really important play-off. They scored twice in the first five minutes and Peñarol never recovered.

But before that both clubs had already qualified for the Cup in a close fight with Nacional, the season's major league winners, who had perhaps played the best soccer in this short tournament. Yet they just could not get the ball into the net and did it only four times in five matches.

Meanwhile World Cup star Fernando Morena's return to goal scoring form had a lot to do with Peñarol's success. He scored both in Peñarol's 2-0 win over classic rivals Nacional in which the latter attacked more and missed a penalty. He got a hat-trick in the 5-1 win over Wanderers and scored both in Peñarol's hardly deserved 2-1 win over Danubio.

And for the second year running the qualifying tournament, called "Liguilla" ended in a dope scandal as Acuña (Huracan Buceo) and Canepa (Wanderers) were provisionally suspended. Remnants of forbidden stimulants were found in routine post match urine samples, but Acuña told the press all he had taken was an aspirin. A year ago it was Nacional's Carrasco who was suspended for three months, but claimed that the drug had been put into a drink without his knowledge.

● IN PERU a provincial team won the national championship for the first time when Union Huaral beat Lima's Sport Boys 2-0 in a play-off after both had finished level on points — with 39 points from 30 games which indicates the close fight — at the top of the table in one of the most exciting finishes ever. Another provincial team Juan Aurich (from Chiclana), for whom veteran international defender Julio Melendez has done wonders since taking over as player-coach during the season, were only a point behind.

Union Huaral, who participated in the Libertadores Cup as vice-champions a couple of years ago and are always called the team of the "chacareros", comes from a farming area some 75 km north-east of Lima and they were practically unbeatable at home. But they missed the chance of becoming outright champions on the last day when they were leading 1-0 at home against Universitario until eight minutes from the end when the latter equalised. A week earlier Sport Boys had relinquished the lead in the table when beaten 4-3 at home by lowly Colegio Nacional Iquitos after leading 3-1.

On the last day Melgar fielded a team with most of their players in unaccustomed positions and their Argentine born goalkeeper, Emilio Campana, playing at centre-forward, scored one of two goals in the team's 4-2 defeat.

The exciting championship, the good showing of the provincial clubs and the introduction of football pools have all helped to increase gates this season — although the average attendance was still only around 7,200 and most clubs finished in the red again. But more important has been the surge of new stars such as half Raul Gorriti and forwards Abel Lobaton and Ernesto Labarthe who may soon put the veteran stars playing with foreign clubs (and which Peru wants for its World Cup team) in the shade.

● PARAGUAY'S Olimpia won the national championship with a 2-0 victory over First Division champions Libertad in the final and here also (just as in Argentina and Brazil in December) a vital national championship encounter produced fighting, injuries and one death. All the players started fighting near the end of the match and this spread to the stands, resulting in numerous injured and the death of one young Olimpia fan. In the semi-finals Olimpia had beaten Teniente Gonzalez 3-1 and Libertad eliminated San Juan 2-0.

● COLOMBIA'S Nacional Medellin won the championship in another close finish which saw one of the final round participants and favourites, Millionarios Bogota, unexpectedly lose their chance when going down to bottom Quindio in the last match. Nacional had been coached for the last three months by Argentine Osvaldo Zubeldia of Estudiantes de La Plata fame (three Libertadores Cup wins) and also have six Argentine players in the team — M. A. Lopez, Boveda, Olmedo, Raschetti, Navarro and Londero. Runners up Deportivo Cali, also under an Argentine coach, Nestor Rossi (one of the first to go to Colombia when that country's professional league started and enticed players without paying transfers), took the vice-championship and second place in the Libertadores Cup although finishing level on points with Millionarios because they had won one of the two championships into which the Colombian season is divided. (It was Nacional's third title in the 28 professional championships held so far).

WORLD CUP NEWS

● URUGUAY continue to be criticised by press and fans in spite of the hard work put in by its coach, Argentine born Juan Eduardo Hohberg who is recognised as one of the best. One paper said: "Seeing Uruguay play is like visiting a sick man" after the match in Montevideo when they failed to beat Ecuador. The score was 1-1 with 15 minutes to go when the referee sent off the entire Ecuador team which would not stop protesting about the sending off of one of their players . . . and now the Uruguayan FA has asked Hohberg to reduce his 28-men squad to 22 immediately to reduce training expenses.

● PERU'S squad was concentrated for extensive training at the seaside resort of Pucasana (60 km south-east of Lima) at the beginning of January, but they had hardly started when a newly formed government World Cup committee threw out coach Alejandro Heredia and replaced him with Marcos Calderon as its first act. Calderon, who had been offered the job some time ago but turned it down due to health reasons, had taken Peru to the 1975 South American title.

Heredia, who had been assistant coach to Brazilian Waldir Pereira "Didi" when Peru reached the World Cup finals in 1970, was criticised for keeping players with little ability on the squad which never had the confidence of officials, press or fans. Calderon immediately picked a new squad of 25 players which, like Heredia's, is based on eight players on the books of foreign clubs — Chumpitaz, Oblitas, Ramirez and Muñante in Mexico, Sotil in Spain, Cubillas in Portugal, Soria and Rojas in Argentina — all with World Cup experience.

At press time the two last mentioned, who had been playing with Independiente in Argentina, had just been transferred back to Peruvian club Sporting Cristal. The new national squad was moved to Arequipa to train in the 2400 metre altitude in readiness for their World Cup match against Ecuador in Quito (2700 km above sea level) and was expected to play Hungary in one of its warm-up games before.

● CHILE, who play in the same qualifying group, have also named five players with foreign clubs in their 24 player squad of mostly experienced internationals for World Cup training and one Argentine born naturalized forward (Spedaletti). Coach Caupolican Peña says they will play attacking soccer as he has good halves and fast shooting forwards for it.

● VENEZUELA, however, may be forced to withdraw from the World Cup as a handful of class players are refusing to start training, mainly because the FA has left it so late as to leave them without even a chance of putting up a reasonable show. At the same time another split between the FA and the league is threatening to disrupt Venezuela's soccer, such as it is. Greek coach Dan Giorgiadis, who had been coaching Peruvian club Alianza Lima, is in charge of the 23-man squad, but can't do anything till they all turn up.

HAPPY BILBAO

ATHLETIC Bilbao are getting their money's worth out of Ignacio Churruca even if, at £330,000, he was their most expensive signing (writes KEIR RADNEDGE).

Churruca is 26, a fast, clever and sharp-shooting left winger ideally moulded in the classic Bilbao tradition of Pirru Gainza, star in the late forties and early fifties.

Bilbao — Athletic not Atletico thanks to the British influence — haven't won anything since 1973 when they won the Cup for a record 22nd time, and fifth in the league now the Cup again is their only hope of a domestic title this term.

If they do succeed, it'll be largely down to Churruca for the fire he's put back into the Lions since his move from Gijon at the end of last season.

Churruca comes from Zarauz — just like goalkeeper Jose Iribar — and joined Gijon as a 17-year-old in the summer of 1967. For a few months he was on loan to Ensidesa, but his talent was as obvious as Gijon's need for goals and in January 1968 he was recalled to the League team.

From his debut against Osasuna the No. 11 jersey was his. Encouragement came first from coach Roman Galarraga, but it was with the appointment of Luis Carriega that Churruca started to shine consistently enough to earn a dozen caps for Spain.

Financial

Gijon had a poor team, but with the goals of Quini and Churruca to sustain them, clung valiantly to a first division place until last season. Relegation and its attendant financial problems meant Churruca had to go up for sale, and Bilbao were first to step in.

The Basques already had an experienced left winger in Chechu Rojo, and Churruca had to find a new role as a striking inside left. But it didn't take many pre-season games to sort that out and in his league debut, away to Real Madrid, Churruca was a sensation.

Inside half an hour Bilbao were 2-0 up — Churruca scoring the first and making the second. Madrid pulled back to 2-2, but tormented throughout by Churruca, finally went down 3-2 — a classic triumph for Bilbao and a marvellous debut for their newest signing.

Only now can Churruca join Bilbao's current UEFA Cup campaign. Since he wasn't qualified to play against Ujpest, Basle and Milan, he makes his European debut against Barcelona in the quarter finals.

Bilbao have little to fear, particularly since Iribar celebrated with a return to form his 500th game for Bilbao. They were made up of 380 in the league, 79 in the Cup, six in the Cup-winners' Cup and 35 in the UEFA Cup. He conceded 546 goals.

Also of course there are his record 48 internationals. And to think . . . Churruca cost £330,000, but Iribar was a mere £8,000 from Basconia in 1962.

The BRIAN GLANVILLE column

I AM distressed and displeased to see the likes of Northern Ireland, Brazil and Italy falling for this ill judged and quite superfluous World Youth competition, to be known, Heaven help us all, as the Coca Cola Cup; one more example of the thoughtless, even callous, exploitation of young players. The finals, to be played as we know in Tunisia, next July, will be physically and psychologically gruelling. I can only repeat that I think it monstrous that teen-aged players should be exposed to such rigours, so early in their careers.

The Football Association, having made an utter fool of itself with its ridiculous demands that soccer hooligans be given corporal punishment, have at least saved our youth players from such "punishment". I can but hope that other leading countries will see the light after the first fiasco has been completed in torrid July.

I HAVE been reading with interest the book, PELE'S NEW WORLD, written by two lively young New York journalists, Peter Bodo and Dave Hirshey. Published by Norton, in the States, it is the product of many weeks of following the Cosmos round America and Europe, many hours of talking to Pele, whose splendid reminiscences strike a genuine and beguiling note. Some of the anecdotes are splendid; Pele, for instance, as a 14-year-old, nervously travelling from Bauru, where he had been playing with his local club, to Sao Paolo, en route to play a trial with Santos, the team with which he would spend the whole of his first class career. (I am not quite sure yet of the exact relations of American clubs to first class football.)

Opposite the overawed youth sat a drunk, who proceeded, Cassandra like, to tell him that he, too, had once been an aspiring footballer, had played professional. Then he had broken a leg and look at him now!

The authors tell in detail the story of how Clive Toye, once a journalist on the DAILY EXPRESS, pursued Pele around the globe on behalf of the New York Cosmos, treated with endlessly evasive courtesy, at long last to get his man. Their observation that Toye would look best in place in a library – perhaps they mean a newspaper library? – brings one briefly up short, but where Pele is talking and where they write of what they have directly observed on the peripheries of the football field, they are worth following.

My friend Paul Gardner, a valued and entertaining contributor to this magazine, an Englishman long expatriate in the United States, has also recently published a book in the United States, THE SIMPLEST GAME (Little, Brown.) He and I are in absolute agreement over the deplorable failure of the North American Soccer League so far to get into the black ghettoes and convert their inhabitants to soccer.

Meanwhile, that fatuity the college soccer draft continues, though it may be ruled illegal. I was surprised and pleased to see included among the players available for signing by professional clubs (though he wasn't signed) a neat little outside-right called Dana Hollingsworth, who had played a number of games last season for my own little Sunday club, Chelsea Casuals, and for the Corinthian-Casuals Reserves.

With deference to Dana, I scarcely think he would ever be considered professional material here, though perhaps if he had been training with a League club from the age of about 15, it would be a different story; and hereby hangs a tale. The tale. The Americans are just not going to get a flow of native born players as long as these, at a most vital and delicate stage of their career, are whisked off into the mediocrities of college soccer; four years spent in the soccer wilderness.

Even Kyle Rote junior, son of a former American football hero, who as we know was a prize "catch" for soccer when he gave up a football scholarship, took a soccer scholarship at Sewanee instead, and turned pro with the Dallas Tornado, has not succeeded. He was dropped towards the end of last season; and by an American coach, at that; Al Miller. Again, had Kyle Rote played soccer from boyhood and been earlier attached to a professional club, it might have been a very different story.

BARCELONA NOW are groaning under the burden of the huge sums of money they have paid to Johan Cruyff. This season he has cost them 48 million pesetas, some £400,000 before the recent devaluation of the peso, a sum which exceeds that paid to all the rest of the team put together.

Were he to become available again for next season, and we can expect that saga to go on right into the early spring, just as it did last year, goodness knows how Barcelona would scrape together the money. They are already in debt to such an extent that it is costing them 100,000 pesetas a day! Money must be spent, too, on building repairs to their massive stadium, the Nou Camp; the penalty, it seems, of using inferior materials when it was put up.

Dramatic achieved

by Arthur Rotmil

VERY FEW soccer countries can point to such a dramatic improvement in their playing standards over the last years as Belgium. Their national side stands currently at the top of its World Cup qualifying group, ahead of the last world championship finalists Holland. And it seems that the Belgians and not the fancied Dutch will this time reach the next world series in Argentina.

But it is at club level that the rise of Belgian football has recently staggered the world. That country with its small resources has in fact produced two finalists in European competitions last season, winning one coveted trophy: RSC Anderlecht claimed the Cup Winners Cup after beating West Ham by 4-2. And FC Bruges were unlucky to lose the final of the UEFA Cup to Liverpool — remembering that the Belgians actually led in the first leg at Anfield by 2-0. . . .

This season three Belgian clubs have reached the quarter-finals in each of the three tournaments: Bruges in the Champions Cup, Anderlecht in the Cup Winners Cup and RWD Molenbeek in the UEFA Cup. Nothing illustrates the strength of that country's soccer and its new status better than this comparison:

In 1956 Manchester United beat Belgium's pride Anderlecht in a European Cup tie by 10-0!

In 1976 Anderlecht found no further use for one of England's most talented forwards, Duncan McKenzie — and they sold this, their reserve player to Everton for £200,000!

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of Belgian football's climb amongst the elite is the realisation that they did almost everything "wrong" in shaping the structure of the game at home. At the time when in England, for instance, the size of the League and specifically the unwieldly First Division is blamed for the disappointing international results and the inability to win the European Cup, the Belgians have actually increased their First Division three years ago from 16 to 20 clubs! Economic considerations forced them later to reduce it to 18 clubs.

While in some countries the influx of foreigners is blamed for the lack of incentives for home bred players and the poor showing of the national side — this problem is posed in England by the multitude of Scotsmen, Irishmen and Welshmen — in Belgium they keep the doors wide open to all-comers! In fact some Belgian clubs rely more on foreigners, than on their own talent. In quality as well as quantity.

Imports

Belgium is indeed for many footballers the "promised land". Alone in the top Division there are 86 players from 20 countries active! Some clubs employ five or more foreign "mercenaries". All the leading teams rely to a large extent on imports, like Anderlecht with their four Dutchmen, Ruiter, Haan, Ressel and Rensenbrinck. Similarly FC Bruges field two Danes, Jensen and Le Fevre, the Austrian Krieger and the Englishman Roger Davis.

The record is held by RWD Molenbeek who boast seven foreigners: De Bree, Boskamp and Koens (all Dutch), Bjerre, Nielsen and Olsen (all Danes) and Wissmann (German). According to regulations a club may only field three foreign players in a match, but a footballer who has stayed for five years is regarded as a Belgian footballer! Thus Molenbeek have been turning out with more foreigners than home grown men! If this trend continues, the time may come when a club here will take the field without any Belgians at all. . . .

The invasion of the country began some years ago when a number of African players from the former Belgian colony, the Congo (now Zaire) were signed up. This was continued with numerous Yugoslavs, Dutchmen, Brazilians, Danes, Swedes, etc. The clubs paid handsome signing-on fees often for quite modest performers who lived well as professional footballers and earned more money than the Belgian players. Naturally the locals began demanding higher wages but this strained the finances of most clubs and many stood on the brink of ruin.

The influx of so many stars from abroad has also upset the national manager, who began having difficulty in raising a side, since very few talented Belgians were getting a chance to play in the first team. For some time only the Bruges centre-forward Raoul Lambert could be considered as a player of genuine international class. The national team often relapsed into defensive attitudes and this also had a negative influence on the clubs' playing systems.

For a time the game in Belgium seemed to be drifting into a cul-de-sac. Most matches were hardly exciting, few goals were scored and too many players used strong arm methods. They were, ironically enough, physically inadequately prepared and most of

Van der Elst of Belgium.

NAPOLI GROUND CLOSED

NAPOLI have had their Stadio San Paolo closed for the eighth time since the war — a record in misbehaviour.

The latest incidents came during the 2-0 defeat by Juventus, when Giuseppe Massa had a goal disallowed nine minutes from time because linesman Agostino Binzagi saw him knock in Luciano Chiarugi's corner with his hand.

As Napoli skipper Antonio Juliano led the protests to referee Gino Menicucci the crowd erupted and Binzagi suffered a cut head from a well-aimed Coca-Cola bottle. What the fans did not know was that Massa was at that moment telling Juliano: "It's no good — I did handle the ball. He was right to disallow the goal."

It had been an ill-fated match. Even beforehand there had been trouble over ticket forgeries, hardly surprisingly for this was a game everyone wanted to see and the capacity 85,000 set a Napoli receipts record of £240,000.

There was similar trouble and another ban for Napoli after this game two years ago. Then, too, a linesman was struck by a missile thrown from the crowd as Juve won 6-2.

Coach Bruno Pesaola missed all the trouble this time. He had been suspended for three weeks just previously for running onto the pitch in Genoa to protest to referee Sergio Gonella at the expulsion of stopper Sauro Catellani in the 2-2 draw with Sampdoria.

At first Napoli's stadium was suspended for three games, but this was cut to two on appeal after Napoli protested that apart from Rome there was nowhere in the south big enough to accommodate their 60,000 season-ticket holders.

They had to go to Bologna to play Perugia, where Beppe Savoldi equalised late for a 1-1 draw, and then slipped a place to fifth with a 2-1 defeat by Fiorentina, who overtook them.

e improvements in Belgium

the players lacked stamina. This was not really surprising, since the Belgian Football Federation have only recognised full time professional football for about four years now. Until 1973 the teams here were composed of pros., part-timers and amateurs.

Now there are nine clubs who engage full time professionals. In the coming year all First Division clubs will be required by order of the BFF to employ at least 14 pros. Of course, that will place a heavy burden on those clubs who get small gates, not because their football is unattractive, but simply because of their location.

In a city like Antwerp, for instance, there are three First Division clubs who are in competition. And worse still, only 10 miles away there is a cluster of four clubs in villages where there just is not enough population to produce a large soccer following.

None the less, the introduction of full professionalism and the renewed efforts to encourage the soccer playing youth have already borne fruit. Thanks to the new legislation football became a more attractive proposition for those youngsters who once had to put their careers before sport, but can now earn a living from playing the game. With the influx of local born youngsters into the clubs, they and the national team are bound to benefit.

Already several promising young players have been discovered, groomed for first team football and are now becoming established in the national side. Men like François Van der Elst (21) and Ludo Coeck (20), both from Anderlecht, are perhaps the best examples of this new trend.

Dictated

And it is the national team to whom the Belgians now look for more prestigious results this season. The new national manager Guy Thys has apparently settled for a flexible 4-4-2 formation, largely dictated by the available players. He has also tried to create a side based on just three clubs.

The goalkeeper Piot and the full backs Gerets and Renquin are from Standard Liege. The centre backs Broos and Ban den Daele, as well as two midfield men Coeck and Van der Elst from Anderlecht. The other two midfielders Cools and Courant together with centre forward Lambert hail from Bruges, whilst the other striker Van Gool was with Bruges till last summer when he was transferred to FC Cologne in Germany.

Belgium has some old scores to settle with their next-door neighbour Holland. Before the last World Cup final series the Belgians did not concede a single goal in six qualifying matches — yet did not go through because the Dutch had a superior goal difference. Holland's tally of 24-2 was better than Belgium's 12-0! In the next to follow European Championship Belgium suffered two painful defeats in the quarter-finals against the Dutch, losing 0-5 away and 1-2 at home. But now, after Northern Ireland surprisingly took a point off Holland in that 2-2 draw in Rotterdam, whilst the Belgians beat the Irish in Liege by 2-0, the boot is on the other foot and Belgium are now in command of this group, which also includes Iceland.

Incidentally, throughout 1976 the Belgians only played four internationals, so now they are looking forward to the forthcoming World Cup qualifying ties. Especially to the crunch game with Holland, on March 26 in Brussels!

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WANTED: Foreign football magazines, of 1975 and 1976, good prices paid. Require, "France Football", "Kicker", "Voetbal International", "Guerin Sportive", etc. Contact Barry Smith, 87 Harcourt Ave., Manor Pk., London, E12 6DB. 01-478 0295.

THE JUNIOR ORANGE BOWL international soccer tournament is seeking applicants for its seventh annual event on Dec. 27—29, 1977 in Miami, Fla. Competition will be for boys and girls in seven divisions including under-16, under-14, under-12 and under-10. The event seeks to promote good will and good soccer. For information write to: Wayne Martin, Jr. OB Soccer, Post Office Box 381164, Miami, Florida, USA. 33138.

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by ERIC BATTY

Players move, m should

NOT LONG after Udo Lattek was sacked by Bayern Munchen after leading them to their first European Cup Final victory and was replaced by Dettmar Cramer, I recall goalkeeper Sepp Maier telling me in an interview that trainers should not stay too long with one club and should move on at most, after five years.

I was reminded of this when reading last month's World Soccer in which Ken Goldman wrote that during an interview with Alec Stock, the ex-Fulham manager told him . . . "I have always believed that managers' contracts should be for about three to five years." That of course is in line with Maier's thinking.

You have to get it straight in your mind right from the outset that the vast majority of managers in my experience are at best con-men. They talk well, using technical terms they've picked up, as players and kid most people that they know what they are talking about.

Listen to them and then see their teams play and at once it becomes obvious that something is amiss. The players do not confirm what their manager tells you, assuming that you understood what he said. Obviously this is not 100% true, but it applies to very many.

Again, in recent years we have seen an increase in the number of clubs who employ both a manager and a coach and this in itself is ridiculous, though from the ex-players viewpoint it doubles their chances of staying in the game when their playing career is over.

Ex-players welcome this switch because, as they will tell you bluntly, it is better than working in a factory, but so many of them are just not equipped to do more than run the legs off their players in training, roast them when things go wrong and urge them to ever greater physical effort.

Having said that, there are a handful of genuine dedicated men about who really know the game. And any club who has one of those should hang on to him as if he were made of solid gold.

But right at the heart of this dilemma, to keep your boss or make regular changes is the question of continuity, particularly as it applies to the development of young players.

Soccer bosses

On the continent, it has been true for years that many of the shrewdest soccer bosses do not want more than a one year contract. They go for the big money, and assuming they have won things in their time as a boss, they promise everything. Cash in quick and move on is their policy and, against this background, who cares about the young reserves for next season's team . . . let alone the kids one hopes will be really good five years from now.

I personally know continental bosses who never see their reserve and junior teams play, even in mid-week. "That is not my duty," they say. "That team has its own trainer."

But this is the heart of the game, and any club that ignores their reserves and youngsters does so at its peril. In today's inflated transfer market you cannot afford to find yourself in need of a player in any position.

Even goalkeepers that were once ten a penny are much sought after today. Not the run of the mill custodians of course, but the real genuine article. And if through accident or injury a club finds they need a goalkeeper quick they can be held to ransom and forced to hand over a fortune.

Stoke City provide a good example, pulling off one of the best buys since the war when they signed Gordon Banks from Leicester for £50,000. But they didn't get off so light when they engaged Peter Shilton, forking out a small fortune for him.

I know Shilton is a good 'keeper, and looked even better when Stoke first signed him, but would they have wanted him if they had had a ready made stand-in for Banks when he had his accident?

Be prepared. It's the boy scouts motto — but it should be written in large letters and hung on a sign over every manager's desk. Be prepared for every eventuality, even the need to replace seven or eight of your first team. If a manager can do it and still get reasonable results it means that he almost certainly has a good assistant with whom he has a good understanding and also that they both work hard at management as a full time job.

Too many managers today, coming back to the English scene, sit in the office talking on the phone and drinking tea. Their idea of a manager is the old one that prevailed before the 1939-45 war, that the manager picks the team and buys and sells players.

In the old days it was the trainer, the man who carried the sponge on match days, who supervised the training . . . "twice round the ground and then we'll have a game."

It was a good life for a man who knew a bit about the game and could tell before he signed a player, whether the lad could play or not.

But all that changed with the revolution that came about in the fifties, and today the preparation of players falls largely on the shoulders of the chief coach.

I know there are still many people in England who think that coaches have ruined the game, and I will agree that too many bad coaches have helped more than a little bit. Even the coaches of

'In our ignorance we have tried to follow the continental system'

s should anagers remain

successful clubs have played their part in ruining the game, particularly in England where success depends more on fitness and fighting ability than pure skill.

One international player who must remain nameless told me in all seriousness that his club manager's answer to all problems was to get stuck in and kick a bit. And if you were in real trouble with an opponent, give him more of that, shaking a clenched fist. Get even more stuck in and kick him!

So many critics, experts, TV tycoons, managers and players are convinced that the English fans would not like to watch real football week after week. They glibly trot out this phrase every time a foreign team comes here and impresses with their skill and apparently leisured, cultured football. How in God's name do they know the fans wouldn't like it? *They have never offered it to the English public.* How can they know?

What they really mean is . . . I don't know how to produce that kind of football so let's kid everyone that the English prefer goalmouth excitement to real football.

There are a handful of men in England headed by Ron Greenwood, Jimmy Adamson and Dave Sexton (with reservations, because he lets his back four get a bit naughty), who know what it's about and are really trying.

But most clubs have a manager and a coach to look after their first team squad and this seems to me to be a formula for problems. To start with, no two men are ever going to think alike all the way down the line, no matter how close they may be.

Sexton takes the right approach and does his own coaching while John Lyall, who is technically assistant manager at West Ham does the training and picks the team.

Other clubs have a coach working with the players and a manager whose responsibility it is to name the side. Thus you can and almost certainly do, have coaches working to create a team that will play with one common approach, thinking as one and playing progressively while the manager comes along at the end of the week and leaves out of the side two or three men who are playing key roles in everything the coach sets up in training.

This system came into England from the continent where to my knowledge it has been the practice in West Germany, Italy, Belgium and Holland for many years to have a business manager and a trainer.

But the continental trainer does the dual job of manager-coach while the Manager is very seldom an ex-player or if he is, he is one who has taken a course in business studies. His role is to attend meetings, supervise the sale of tickets, liaise with publicity men, lay on the police for matches, in fact to do the tasks that in England are undertaken by the club secretary.

In our ignorance, we have tried to follow the continental system, obviously hoping that this would lead to an improvement, but it doesn't work because we didn't understand what the continental manager does.

An awful lot of misunderstandings must arise when you split the duties and have an office manager picking the team and a club coach doing the work on the training ground. Significantly, a handful of English managers insist on taking their coaches with them when they change clubs. But as was made clear by Alec Stock's comments, he picked the team at Fulham while the coach looked after the training and this state of affairs exists at far too many clubs.

What does the coach do for example if one or two players are a bit less than wholehearted in their approach to the training session the coach sets up? Can he go to the manager and insist that the players, perhaps a big star, be left out of the side? Can he say please sir, the players don't want to work in the modern manner, preferring the way they trained last season, can you lay down the law?

The obvious answer is that the man who picks the team must be the man who takes charge of the training sessions because only in this way does the man doing the job carry the authority he must have.

Most critical of all, the young players today must be brought up to the club system; to be coached to play the same way right from the youngest team to the first team. If they don't, then the players do not fit into the first team when they grow up and with top class players so hard to find today and so expensive to buy, it is vital that the club has continuity. Changes of policy from the top are going to affect the kids, the stars of the future, and on these grounds alone there must be continuity. The players should go if they lack motivation or get accustomed to an easy life. It's the boss that matters.

BELGIUM WIN KENTISH CUP

by Jack Rollin

NOWADAYS THE World Military Championships are big stuff. But the practical demise of the British Army as a force on the football field if not elsewhere is a sad fact of modern times.

Recently the long standing Kentish Cup was played for and won yet again by the Belgian Army, their fifth successive achievement in a competition which dates back to the First World War.

Then as a result of football matches arranged between the soldiers of British, French and Belgian armies the English Brigadier-General Kentish presented a cup for a Triangular Tournament between the three.

The original idea was to present the cup outright to the Army who managed to win it four times in succession. But in 1928 after the British Army had done just this, it was decided to donate the trophy annually as a Challenge Cup which it has remained until now.

Not unlike the exciting war-time experiences of the Jules Rimet Trophy itself the Kentish Cup had its own escape story. In 1939 it was in the possession of the Belgian Army the winners that year. Though the country was overrun by the Germans, a few Belgians managed to hide it until after hostilities ended.

Post-war Europe featured the retention of national service commitments and in this respect the British Army was as well served as any. Hundreds of young professionals appeared in the khaki uniform and as a result many useful sides were put into the field for the Kentish Cup.

Decades

However since the ending of national service during the last couple of decades, there has been a falling off in the standard of football in the Army. This is in contrast to other European countries who have retained a form of national service. In this respect Belgium in particular has benefited in the Kentish Cup.

Yet it must not be forgotten that soldiers of Great Britain were responsible for not only playing the game in its early days but also spreading it around the world wherever they were stationed in what used to be called the Empire.

The early days of the F.A. Cup featured the Royal Engineers as finalists on three occasions and winners once, too. Many serving soldiers were capped at amateur level, nine even received full caps though all but one of these came in the days preceding professionalism on an international scale.

That single exception was Captain K. E. (Jackie) Hegan. He captained the Army team from 1922 to 1932, played outside-left for the Amateur International side on more than 20 occasions, was a member of the Olympic side in 1920 and won four full caps against Ireland plus ironically enough both Belgium (twice) and France in 1923 and 1924. Hegan also turned out for the Corinthians and during the 1939-45 war he was awarded the O.B.E. He finished up as a Colonel, too.

Naturally those days are long past and now it is in Eastern Europe that there are successful Army teams of international class. Probably the most famous is CSKA Sofia the Bulgarian Army team who have in the post-war period become the most famous in the country, winning 19 League championships and ten cups. They have also distinguished themselves in Europe and have reached the semi-final of the European Cup.

Dukla Prague of Czechoslovakia enjoyed some success as the best team there in the 1960s, Honved of Hungary also became well known in the previous decade, while again in the 1960s ASK Vorwaerts led the way in East Germany.

Glory

Across in Poland it has been Legia Warsaw who have had their moments of fleeting glory while the Russian Central Army team of Moscow won five of the first six post-war championships, too. And in Yugoslavia, Partizan Belgrade were runners-up in the European Cup in 1966 to Real Madrid.

Since the 1950s there has been an annual Army competition for nations called the World Military Championships a permanent fixture in the calendar and attracting such an intensity of interest that the preliminary stages have to be played off in groups with usually four group winners playing off in a final pool in one country.

Not only Europe gets into the act of course, the South Americans have also been concerned. Perhaps their most famous combatant was the great Pele of Brazil. In the 1960 South American Army Championship he was in their final side against Argentina in Rio.

These old rivals needed no military designation to start a battle and it was not before both Pele and Basilico of the Argentinian side were sent off after a flare up. This exploded into a riot which senior Army

Turkey's new boss

Metin Turel, 40, is the new manager of the Turkish national team and his charges got off to a good start recently with a 2-0 victory over Bulgaria. Turel, born in Instanbul, is a former Turkish league goalkeeper.

The great Pele, in action for New York Cosmos, is an ex-army player.

officers including a General had to calm down. The match ended in a 2-1 win for Brazil but not before three more Argentinians had been given their marching orders. . . .

All this is far removed from the Kentish Cup 1967-77 version and a damp February evening at the Recreation Ground, Aldershot when the thin red line of the British Army bravely attempted to stem the relentless tide of yellow shirted Belgians in the annual contest. With their own Military Stadium out of action because of repairs following the 1976 summer drought they borrowed Aldershot FC's ground.

Everything looked against them. The local Fourth Division side had only the previous Saturday given one of their worst displays of all time in losing by a penalty at home to Torquay United, so few locals wanted to return quickly to the scene of the crime.

Stages

Less than 100 paid for admission though more than double that number were admitted as guests, the Band of the Royal Corps of Transport spread themselves on the steps of the north stand, and few squaddies bayed noisily in the opening stages, but it was almost embarrassing to watch the proceedings.

Only a few blunderbuss shots from long range mostly from left-winger Lance-Corporal Dave Meldrum and some courageous charges into the Belgian penalty area, kept the Army side in with a chance against the more skilful, professional opposition.

Mercifully the French referee the celebrated Robert Helies showed a keen sense of humour as well as pretty strict control of some heavy tackling on both sides.

After 21 minutes Jos Van Holst the tall, dark haired centre-forward of the Belgian Army opened the scoring with a rocket shot from 25 yards which crashed in off the underside of the crossbar.

But then Corporal Alan Goucher then hit the bar from a penalty three minutes after the restart and in his excitement Quarter-Master Sergeant Instructor Alf Coulton, the Army captain, handled the rebound!

Van Holst added another goal in the second half and having already beaten the French Army 4-1 the weekend previously, the Belgians clinched the Kentish Cup yet again.

The Army trooped off the field and disappeared to more soldierly duties hoping perhaps for better things next year — but likely only if improbably national service becomes compulsory again.

British Army: Hamilton (P.); Stacey, Macdonald, Goucher, Hamilton (A.), Ward, Doig, Seed (Steadman), Blanche, Coulton, Meldrum.

Belgian Army: Munsters; Gaspard (Cattis), Schepens, Phillips, Marinus, Debeugnous, Cordier, Van Pelt, Van Holst, Jacucha, Martens (De Wil).

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Chile —high hopes of Everton

by ERIC WEIL

NO CHILEAN team has ever won the South American club championship for the Libertadores Cup, but Chileans are placing a lot of hope in their 1976 champions Everton from the seaside resort of Viña del Mar, some 140 km from the capital of Santiago. They worked something of a miracle to win the title in the first place, so another miracle is on the cards.

Everton's players Spedaletti, Ceballos (11), Ahumada, Caceres, Lopez and Galindo celebrating Ahumada's goal in the final 3-1 playoff win for the Chilean First Division title against Union Española

Why Everton? There's no known connection with Liverpool's Everton other than the fact that soccer was introduced by British settlers in Chile like almost everywhere else on the South American continent. Not unnaturally they named their teams after famous British league clubs. Most of these no longer exist, but there are still three in the First Division — Rangers, Wanderers and Everton.

Everton, who previously won the title in 1950 and 1952, will be taking part in the Libertadores Cup (which has only been played for since 1960) for the first time. A poor spell sent them down to the second division in 1973, but they returned in 1975 to finish 12th. Last year a new committee took over at the club under president Antonio Martinez who, curiously, had previously guided the fortunes of the previous year's champions, Union Española of Santiago. He immediately set about forming a team to take the title off his old club.

National

To work this "miracle" he engaged a coach, Pedro Morales, who had wrought a similar miracle in 1974 when he took the modest provincial club, Huachipato, to their first ever title while he had also been a former national team coach.

Morales bought wisely to form the right combination — international defender Mario Galindo from Colo Colo, forward Sergio Ahumada who had been playing in Mexico, midfield man Mario Salinas and Carlos Caceres (forward) from his former club, Huachipato and left winger Luis Ceballos from Argentina's Atlanta. He already had outstanding defenders in Guillermo Azucar and Uruguayan Brunel as well as Argentine born penetrating forward Spedaletti.

The soccer they played also pleased the fans, because it had the basic characteristics of today's game — solid defence and penetrating attack, meaning equilibrium, good marking and creative ability. Within a month of the start of the season they were among the leaders and never dropped more than a couple of points behind. Their 76-43 goal average at the end of their regular 34-match league programme tells the tale of their soccer . . . and they won the title in a First Division championship in which the over-all standard was an improvement on recent years.

Meanwhile, other leading teams concentrated too much on defence and were not prepared to take risks, specially champions Union Española and this was, apart from everything else, unpopular with the Chilean fans who like to watch good soccer, perhaps more than in any other South American country.

Union Española, with 70% of Chile's national squad in their lineup, had been everybody's favourite for the title. In fact, they looked the more solid team — even in the two playoff matches for the title after the two clubs had finishad the regular season with 53 points each. But by not taking risks and defending too much, Union Española sometimes failed to score the goals they should and lost points which they needed badly in the end.

Everton, who completed a notable "double" for the blue, gold and blue shirts also worn by Argentine champions, Boca Juniors, across the Andes, continued the good work in the international summer tournament they organised and in which they finished second to resurging Santos (Brazil) and in front of Austria FC (Austria), River Plate (Argentina), Colo Colo (Chile) and Universidad de Chile.

Campaign

They look in fine shape for their Libertadores Cup campaign in which, however, their first round group games against Paraguay's Libertad and Olimpia (apart from Universidad de Chile) will be no push overs.

The line up for the 1977 Libertadores Cup was completed with the classification of Bolivar (champions) and Oriente Petrolero (vice-champions) from the Bolivian championship which only ended in the third week of January. Bolivar will be participating for the fifth time (Oriente for the second) and with their entire first team in the national squad playing World Cup qualifying games immediately before the start of the Cup, they should also be in excellent shape.

Matches will not commence until early April this year so that World Cup qualifying games (during February and March) can be

got out of the way first. The only exception is the group one encounter between Argentina's Boca Juniors and River Plate, scheduled for March 9, as Argentina is not engaged in World Cup qualifying games. But it remains to be seen whether the Argentine national squad, faced with a heavy international programme, will release Boca and River players. With the Uruguayan representatives (Peñarol and Defensor) in group one, this is, on paper, the closest of the lot.

SANTOS AGAIN

BRAZIL'S SANTOS came back into the international limelight by winning the six club international tournament in Chile in the summer with only Clodoaldo of their old guard left. Their soccer may not have been as attractive as when they marvelled the whole world in the 60's, but they still shone with their attacking style backed by a tighter defence.

Argentine national vice champions River Plate played in both this tournament and the summer tournament in Mar del Plata (Argentina) at the same time without being physically ready for either. Result — disappointing performances, rifts between players and coach (although denied), a next to bottom place in Chile and third out of five in Mar del Plata where the Argentine national squad won the cup.

WORLD SOCCER CLASSIFIED RESULTS

February 13

ECUADOR (1) 2 (Liciardi 2)
PARAGUAY (0) 1 (Spinola)

Ecuador: Delgado, Mendez, Carrera, Villena, Klinger, Tenorio, Granda, Villafuerte, Rhon, Liciardi, Nieves. (Subs: Ortiz, Paz, Mantilla).

Paraguay: Benitez, Solalinde, Aifuch, Benitez, Issasi, Sosa, Gonzalez, Colman, Aquino, Paniagua, Bareiro. (Subs: Villalba, Spinola).

MAJOR CLUB INTERNATIONALS

Chilean international tournament (organised by Everton): Jan 19 — Santos (Brazil) 3 Colo Colo (Chile) 1; Jan 20 — Colo Colo 3 River Plate (Argentina) 2; Austria FC (Austria) 2 Universidad de Chile 0; Jan 26 — River Plate 2 Austria 0; Everton (Chile) 4 Univ. de Chile 2; Jan 28 — Santos 2, River Plate 0; Everton 2 Colo Colo 1; Jan 30 — Austria 1 Everton 0; Feb 1: Univ. de Chile 1, River Plate 1; Austria 1, Santos 0; Feb 3 — Everton 6, River Plate 2. Feb 5 — Colo Colo 1 Austria 0; Santos 2 Univ.de Chile 0. (Final standings: 1. Santos 8 pts; 2. Everton, Austria & Colo Colo 6; 5. River Plate 3; 6. Univ.de Chile 1.)

Friendlies: Jan 16 — Everton (Chile) 2 Atlanta (Argentina) 4; Independiente Santa Fe (Colombia) 1 FC Oeste (Argentina) 2; Jan 19 — Millionarios Bogota (Colombia) 1 Banik Ostrava (Czechoslovakia) 3; Jan 20 — Independiente Medellin (Colombia) 2 FC Oeste (Argentina) 3; Jan 22 — Valparaiso Wanderers (Chile) 2 Banfield (Argentina) 1; Jan 23 — Deportes Tolima (Colombia) 0 FC Oeste (Argentina) 0; Independiente Medellin (Colombia) 2 Quilmes (Argentina) 2; Jan 27 — Deportivo Cali (Colombia) 0 FC Oeste 1 (Argentina); Jan 30 — Motagua (Honduras) 0 Quilmes (Argentina) 1; Deportivo Pereira (Colombia) 0 FC Oeste (Argentina) 3; Feb 2 — Nacional Quito (Equador) 3 FC Oeste (Argentina) 5; Wanderers Montevideo (Uruguay) 1 All Boys (Argentina) 1; Feb 6 — Independiente Medellin (Colombia) 1 Gremio Porto Alegre (Brazil) 0; Atletico Junior (Colombia) 0 Independiente (Argentina) 1; Liga Deportiva Universitaria (Ecuador) 0 FC Oeste (Argentina) 1; Feb 8 — Newell's Old Boys Rosario (Argentina) 1 Santos (Brazil) 4; Feb 10 — Universidad Catolica (Ecudor) 1 FC Oeste (Argentina) 4; Feb 12 — Deportivo Cali (Colombia) 1 Gremio Porto Alegre (Brazil) 4; Feb 13 — America Cali (Colombia) 0 Cruzeiro Bello Horizonte (Brazil) 2; Temperley (Argentina) 2 Montevideo Wanderers (Uruguay) 1.

OTHER INTERNATIONALS: Jan 12 — Chile 1 Quilmes (Argentina) 1; Jan 16 — Chile 1 Quilmes (Argentina) 0; Uruguay 4 Cruzeiro B. Horizonte (Brazil) 1; Jan 19 — Chile 8 Banfield (Argentina) 0; Uruguay 1 Gremio Porto Alegre (Brazil) 1; Jan 23 — Chile 1 Cruzeiro B. Horiz. (Brazil) 1; Colombia 2 Banik Ostrava (Czechoslovakia) 0; Jan 26 — Uruguay 6 Independiente (Argentina) 0; Goias (Brazil) 2 Bulgaria 0; Jan 28 — Bolivia 1 Cruzeiro B. Horiz. (Brazil) 1; Jan 30 — Bolivia 2 Cruzeiro B. H. (Brazil) 3; Feb 3 — Deportivo Saprissa (Costa Rica) 2 Hungary 3; Ecuador 1 Cruzeiro B.H. (Brazil) 1; Feb 4 — Peru 2 Lanus (Argentina) 0; Feb 6 — Peru 3 Lanus (Argentina) 0.

ARG

ASIA				OCEANIA
Winners of Groups I to IV to be known by 31.3.77				Winner to be known by 31.7.77
Group I	Group II	Group III	Group IV	
Hong Kong Indonesia Malaysia Thailand Singapore Sri Lanka	Israel Japan DPR Korea Rep. Korea	Iran Saudi Arabia Syria	Bahrain Kuwait Qatar	Australia New Zealand Taiwan
1 winner	1 winner	1 winner	1 winner	Winner Oceania
		1.4 to 31.7.77 Winner ASIA	1.8 to 30.11.77	
		Qualified for Argentina		

ASIA/OCEANIA

3. 7.77 Australia v New Zealand
6. 7.77 Taiwan v Australia
10. 7.77 Australia v Taiwan
13. 7.77 N. Zealand v Taiwan
17. 7.77 N. Zealand v Australia
20. 7.77 Taiwan v N. Zealand

Group 3

12.11.76 Saudi Arabia 2, Syria 0
26.11.76 Syria 2, Saudi Arabia 1
7. 1.77 Saudi Arabia 0, Iran 3
28. 1.77 Syria v Iran
22. 4.77 Iran v Saudi Arabia
29. 4.77 Iran v Syria

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran	1	1	0	0	3	0	2
Syria	2	1	0	1	2	3	2
S. Arabia	3	1	0	2	3	5	2

Group 2

27. 2.77 Israel v Korea Rep.
Japan v Korea DPR
6. 3.77 Israel v Japan
Korea Rep. v Korea DPR
13. 3.77 Japan v Israel
Korea DPR v Korea Rep.
20. 3.77 Korea Rep. v Israel
Korea DPR v Japan
26. 3.77 Japan v Korea Rep.
27. 3.77 Korea DPR v Israel
3. 4.77 Korea Rep. v Japan
4. 4.77 Israel v Korea DPR

EUROPE

Group 1

23. 5.76 Cyprus 1, Denmark 5
16.10.76 Portugal 0, Poland 2
27.10.76 Denmark 5, Cyprus 0
31.10.76 Poland 5, Cyprus 0
17.11.76 Portugal 1, Denmark 0
5.12.76 Cyprus 1, Portugal 2
1. 5.77 Denmark v Poland
15. 5.77 Cyprus v Poland
21. 9.77 Poland v Denmark
29.10.77 Poland v Portugal
16.11.77 Portugal v Cyprus

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Denmark	3	2	0	1	10	2	4
Poland	2	2	0	0	7	0	4
Portugal	3	2	0	1	3	3	4
Cyprus	4	0	0	4	2	17	0

Group 2

13. 6.76 Finland 1, England 4
22. 9.76 Finland 7, Luxembourg 1
13.10.76 England 2, Finland 1
16.10.76 Luxembourg 1, Italy 4
17.11.76 Italy 2, England 0
30. 3.77 England v Luxembourg
26. 5.77 Luxembourg v Finland
8. 6.77 Finland v Italy
12.10.77 Luxembourg v England
15.10.77 Italy v Finland
16.11.77 England v Italy
3.12.77 Italy v Luxembourg

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	2	2	0	0	6	1	4
England	3	2	0	1	8	4	4
Finland	3	1	0	2	8	7	2
Luxembourg	2	0	0	2	2	11	0

Group 3

31.10.76 Turkey 4, Malta 0
17.11.76 German DR 1, Turkey 1
5.12.76 Malta 0, Austria 1
2. 4.77 Malta v German DR
17. 4.77 Austria v Turkey
30. 4.77 Austria v Malta
24. 9.77 Austria v German DR
12.10.77 German DR v Austria
29.10.77 German DR v Malta
30.10.77 Turkey v Austria
16.11.77 Turkey v German DR
27.11.77 Malta v Turkey

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Turkey	2	1	1	0	5	1	3
Austria	1	1	0	0	1	0	2
East Germany	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Malta	2	0	0	2	0	5	0

Group 4

5. 9.76 Iceland 0, Belgium 1
8. 9.76 Iceland 0, Netherlands 1
13.10.76 Netherlands 2, Northern Ireland 2
10.11.76 Belgium 2, Northern Ireland 0
26. 3.77 Belgium v Netherlands
11. 6.77 Iceland v Northern Ireland
31. 8.77 Netherlands v Iceland
4. 9.77 Belgium v Iceland
21. 9.77 Northern Ireland v Netherlands
26.10.77 Netherlands v Belgium
16.11.77 Northern Ireland v Belgium

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Belgium	2	2	0	0	3	0	4
Holland	2	1	1	0	3	2	3
N. Ireland	2	0	1	0	2	4	1
Iceland	2	0	0	2	0	2	0

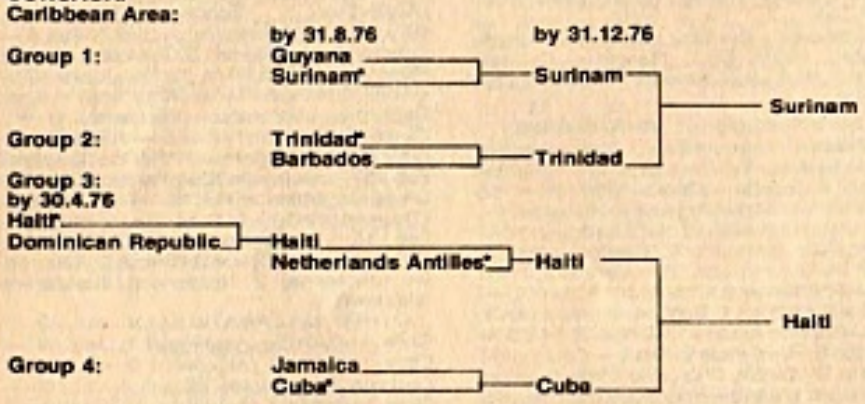
Group 5

9.10.76 Bulgaria 2, France 2
17.11.76 France 2, Eire 0
30. 3.77 Eire v France
1. 6.77 Bulgaria v Eire
12.10.77 Eire v Bulgaria
16.11.77 France v Bulgaria

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	2	1	1	0	4	2	3
Bulgaria	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Eire	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

CONCACAF

Caribbean Area:



Caribbean Area

2. 4.76 Dom. Republic 0, Haiti 3
17. 4.76 Haiti 3, Dom. Republic 0
4. 7.76 Guyana 2, Surinam 0
31. 7.76 N. Antilles 1, Haiti 2
14. 8.76 Haiti 7, N. Antilles 0
15. 8.76 Barbados 2, Trinidad/Tobago 1
15. 8.76 Jamaica 1, Cuba 3
29. 8.76 Cuba 2, Jamaica 0
29. 8.76 Surinam 3, Guana 0
31. 8.76 Trinidad/Tobago 1, Barbados 0
14. 9.76 Trinidad/Tobago 3, Barbados 1 (3rd match in Barbados)
14.11.76 Surinam 1, Trinidad/Tobago 1
28.11.76 Trinidad/Tobago 2, Surinam 2
18.12.76 Surinam 3, Trinidad/Tobago 2
28.11.76 Cuba 1, Haiti 1
11.12.76 Haiti 1, Cuba 1
Play-off Haiti 2, Cuba 0

Central Area

4. 4.76 Panama 3, Costa Rica 2
2. 5.76 Panama 1, El Salvador 1
11. 7.76 Costa Rica 3, Panama 0
1. 8.76 El Salvador 4, Panama 1
17. 9.76 Panama 2, Guatemala 4
26. 9.76 Guatemala 7, Panama 0
1.12.76 El Salvador 1, Costa Rica 1
5.12.76 Costa Rica 0, Guatemala 0
8.12.76 Guatemala 3, El Salvador 1
12.12.76 Guatemala 1, Costa Rica 1
17.12.76 Costa Rica 1, El Salvador 1
19.12.76 El Savador 2, Guatemala 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guatemala	6	3	2	1	15	6	8
El Salvador	6	2	3	1	10	7	7
Costa Rica	6	1	4	1	6	6	6
Panama	6	1	1	4	7	21	3

GENTINA '78

AFRICA

Extra Peliminary Round

7. 3.76 Sierra Leone 5, Niger 1
21. 3.76 Niger 2, Sierra Leone 1
13. 3.76 Upper Volta 1, Mauritania 1
28. 3.76 Mauritania 0, Upper Volta 2

First Round

1. 4.76 Algeria 1, Libya 0
16. 4.76 Libya 0, Algeria 0
9. 5.76 Zambia 4, Malawi 0
30. 5.76 Malawi 0, Zambia 1
4. 9.76 Upper Volta 1, Ivory Coast 1
25. 9.76 Ivory Coast 2, Upper Volta 0
31.10.76 Senegal 1, Togo 1
17.10.76 Togo 1, Senegal 0
10.10.76 Ghana 2, Guinea 1
16.10.76 Sierra Leone 0, Nigeria 0
30.10.76 Nigeria 6, Sierra Leone 2
17.10.76 Congo 2, Cameroon 2
31.10.76 Cameroon 0, Congo 2
Guinea 2, Ghana 1
29.10.76 Egypt 3, Ethiopia 0
14.11.76 Ethiopia 1, Egypt 2
12.12.76 Morocco 1, Tunisia 1
9. 1.77 Tunisia 1, Morocco 1
16. 1.77 Ghana 0, Guinea 2
(play-off)

Second Round

5. 2.77 Tunisia 2, Algeria 0
6. 2.77 Kenya 0 Egypt 0

Group 6

16. 6.76 Sweden 2, Norway 0
8. 9.76 Norway 1, Switzerland 0
9.10.76 Switzerland 1, Sweden 2
8. 6.77 Sweden v Switzerland
7. 9.77 Norway v Sweden
30.10.77 Switzerland v Norway

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	2	2	0	0	4	1	4
Norway	2	1	0	1	1	2	2
Switzerland	2	0	0	2	1	3	0

Group 7

13.10.77 Czechoslovakia 2, Scotland 0
17.11.76 Scotland 1, Wales 0
30. 3.77 Wales v Czechoslovakia
21. 9.77 Scotland v Czechoslovakia
12.10.77 Wales v Scotland
16.11.77 Czechoslovakia v Wales

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czechoslovakia	1	1	0	0	2	0	2
Scotland	2	1	0	1	1	2	2
Wales	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

CONCACAF
(extra preliminary matches)

Northern Area

24. 9.76 Canada 1, USA 1
3.10.76 USA 0, Mexico 0
10.10.76 Canada 1, Mexico 0
15.10.76 Mexico 3, USA 0
20.10.76 USA 2, Canada 0
27.10.76 Mexico 0, Canada 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mexico	4	1	2	1	3	1	4
Canada	4	1	2	1	2	3	4
USA	4	1	2	1	3	4	4

AFRICA

Extra Preliminary Time limit: 31.3.76 — 1st Round Time limit: 31.10.76 — 2nd Round Time limit: 28.2.77 — 3rd Round Time limit: 31.7.77 — Concluding Matches Time limit: 30.11.77

1. Algeria / Libya — Algeria
2. Morocco / Tunisia — Tunisia
3. Senagal / Togo — Togo
4. Ghana / Guinea — Guinea
5. Zaire / Central Africa — Zaire
6. Sierra Leone / Nigeria — Nigeria
7. Congo / Cameroon — Congo
8. Upper Volta / Ivory Coast — Ivory Coast
9. Egypt / Ethiopia — Egypt
10. Sudan / Kenya — Kenya
11. Uganda / Tanzania — Uganda
12. Zambia / Malawi — Zambia

Sierra Leone* Niger

Mauritania Upper Volta*

Tunisia — Togo — I

Nigeria — II

Kenya — Uganda — III

(Tanzania, Sudan, Central Africa and Zaire withdrew)

Group 8

10.10.76 Spain 1, Yugoslavia 0
6. 4.77 Rumania v Spain
8. 5.77 Yugoslavia v Rumania
6.10.77 Spain v Rumania
3.11.77 Rumania v Yugoslavia
30.11.77 Yugoslavia v Spain

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	1	1	0	0	1	0	2
Yugoslavia	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Rumania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Group 9

9.10.76 Greece 1, Hungary 1
24. 4.77 USSR v Greece
30. 4.77 Hungary v USSR
10. 5.77 Greece v USSR
18. 5.77 USSR v Hungary
25. 5.77 Hungary v Greece

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Greece	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Hungary	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
USSR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

SOUTH AMERICA

Group 1

20. 2.77 Colombia 0, Brazil 0
24. 2.77 Colombia v Paraguay
6. 3.77 Paraguay v Colombia
9. 3.77 Brazil v Colombia
13. 3.77 Paraguay v Brazil
17/20. 3.77 Brazil v Paraguay

Group 2

9. 2.77 Venezuela 1, Uruguay 1
27. 2.77 Bolivia v Uruguay
6. 3.77 Venezuela v Bolivia
13. 3.77 Bolivia v Venezuela
17. 3.77 Uruguay v Venezuela
27. 3.77 Uruguay v Bolivia

Group 3

20. 2.77 Ecuador 1, Peru 1
27. 2.77 Ecuador v Chile
6. 3.77 Chile v Peru
12. 3.77 Peru v Ecuador
20. 3.77 Chile v Ecuador
26. 3.77 Peru v Chile

WORLD CUP GUIDE

Argentina '78

Brian Kidd of Football League championship contenders Manchester City, against Newcastle United.

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Bruges	22	14	4	4	47	22	32
RWD Molenbeek	22	12	6	4	35	23	30
Anderlecht	22	11	6	5	49	28	28
Lokeren	22	10	6	6	31	21	26
Beerschot	22	9	8	5	43	33	26
Standard	22	9	7	6	24	19	25
Antwerp	22	9	7	6	30	29	25
CS Bruges	22	8	7	7	41	34	23
Kortrijk	22	8	7	7	29	30	23
Lierse SK	22	8	5	9	27	28	21
Waregem	22	8	4	10	32	32	20
Winterslag	22	7	6	9	26	27	20
Beveren-Waas	22	6	8	8	21	27	20
Beringen	22	7	5	10	30	34	19
Mechelen	22	5	7	10	24	32	17
SC Charleroi	22	5	6	11	17	30	16
Oostende	22	4	5	13	26	43	13
Liege	22	4	4	14	14	54	12

WEST GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bor. M'gladbach	21	13	4	4	41	21	30
E. Braunschwg.	20	10	8	2	34	22	28
Schalke 04	21	11	4	6	47	36	26
Bayern	22	10	6	6	54	43	26
MSV Duisburg	22	8	9	5	42	30	25
Bor. Dortmund	20	8	6	6	46	36	22
Hertha BSC	22	8	6	8	36	31	22
Cologne	22	9	4	9	42	40	22
Werder Bremen	22	8	6	8	38	38	22
Hamburger SV	22	8	6	8	41	42	22
VfL Bochum	22	8	5	9	34	36	21
Fort. Düsseldorf	21	7	6	8	30	33	20
Ein. Frankfurt	20	8	3	9	43	38	19
Kaiserslautern	22	8	3	11	33	33	19
Karlsruher SC	22	6	7	9	33	42	19
Saarbrücken	21	4	6	11	17	31	14
TB Berlin	21	4	6	11	28	57	14
Rot-W Essen	21	4	5	12	30	60	13

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	22	13	4	5	49	21	30
Atletico Madrid	21	12	5	4	37	19	29
Valencia	22	10	6	6	37	30	26
Real Sociedad	22	10	5	7	41	25	25
E. Barcelona	22	10	5	7	40	36	25
Athletic Bilbao	21	9	5	7	36	31	23
Real Madrid	22	9	5	8	37	35	23
Salamanca	22	9	4	9	21	23	22
Las Palmas	22	9	4	9	31	35	22
Sevilla	22	6	10	6	17	25	22
Elche	22	8	5	9	30	31	21
Real Betis	22	9	3	10	29	30	21
Racing San.	22	7	6	9	25	39	20
Hercules Alic.	22	6	7	9	17	24	19
Celta Vigo	22	6	7	9	13	22	19
Burgos	22	7	4	11	30	34	18
Zarogoza	22	5	7	10	27	36	17
Malaga	22	3	6	13	13	35	12

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	pts
Torino	16	11	5	0	29	9	27
Juventus	16	13	1	2	26	10	27
Inter	16	7	6	3	21	13	20
Fiorentina	16	6	8	2	20	12	20
Napoli	16	7	5	4	25	19	19
Perugia	16	5	6	5	16	14	16
Roma	16	5	6	5	19	18	16
Lazio	16	4	7	5	16	17	15
Verona	16	4	7	5	15	20	15
Genoa	16	4	6	6	24	22	14
Milan	16	2	9	5	15	20	13
Catanzaro	16	4	5	7	11	19	13
Foggia	16	3	5	8	16	23	11
Sampdoria	16	2	7	7	12	22	11
Bologna	16	2	7	7	10	23	11
Cesena	16	2	4	10	9	23	8

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ajax	23	17	3	3	45	17	37
Feyenoord	23	13	8	2	51	21	34
PSV Eindhoven	23	13	5	5	44	23	31
AZ '67 Alkmaar	23	12	5	6	56	22	29
Roda JC K'rade	23	11	6	6	38	22	28
Utrecht	23	12	4	7	44	41	28
NAC Breda	23	9	6	8	33	36	24
Sp. Rotterdam	23	8	7	8	32	38	23
Den Haag	23	7	8	8	36	27	22
Haarlem	23	7	7	9	25	33	21
Twente Ensch.	23	8	4	11	27	29	20
NEC Nijmegen	23	5	9	9	35	34	19
GAE Deventer	23	5	9	9	29	47	19
EEV Eindhoven	23	5	9	9	21	45	19
VVV Venlo	23	5	7	11	21	40	17
Telstar Velsen	23	5	6	12	25	42	16
Amsterdam	23	3	9	11	24	42	15
De Graafschap	23	3	6	14	18	45	12

PERU: First Division (final standings)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Union Huaral*	31	16	9	6	46	25	41
Sport Boys*	31	13	13	5	47	34	39
Juan Aurich	30	13	12	5	41	29	38
Universitario	30	13	10	7	41	33	36
Alianza Lima	30	11	12	7	51	32	34
L. de Huanuco	30	11	11	8	37	29	33
Sporting Crist.	30	9	12	9	28	26	30
Col. Nac. Iquitos	30	10	9	11	30	34	29
Melgar FC	30	10	9	11	45	52	29
Deportivo Junin	30	10	9	11	40	38	29
Alfonso Ugarte	30	10	6	14	46	43	26
Atletico Chalaco	30	7	12	11	38	52	26
Defensor Lima	30	8	10	12	39	57	26
Cienciano	30	7	12	11	36	37	26
Dep. Municipal	30	5	13	12	34	46	23
Carlos M.	30	7	3	20	34	65	17

*includes playoff won 2-0 by Union Huaral.

Classified Results

URUGUAY: Playoff (Liquilla) for Libertadores Cup places (final standings)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Defensor*	6	5	0	1	16	4	10
Peñarol*	6	4	0	2	17	10	8
Nacional	5	2	2	1	4	4	6
Wanderers	5	2	1	2	3	6	5
Huracan Buceo	5	1	1	3	4	13	3
Danubio	5	0	0	5	4	11	0

*Includes first place playoff which Defensor won 4-1, but winners and Peñarol qualify for Libertadores Cup.

BOLIVIA: National Championship final round

After 6 matches: 1) Bolivar 9 pts; 2) The Strongest, Guabira & Oriente Petrolero 7; 5) Jorge Wilsterman & Aurora 5; 7) Blooming 2.

COLOMBIA: Championship final round (final standings)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional Med	10	6	2	2	20	7	14
Dep. Cali	10	5	2	3	23	15	12
Million Bog	10	5	2	3	15	11	12
Junior	10	5	1	4	15	15	11
Caldas	10	3	1	6	14	21	7
Quindio	10	1	2	7	7	25	4

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sporting	18	13	3	2	37	14	29
Benfica	18	13	3	2	40	18	29
Porto	18	11	2	5	38	16	24
Boavista Porto	18	9	3	6	30	23	21
Acad. Coimbra	18	9	2	7	20	17	20
Varzim	18	7	5	6	26	28	19
Vit. Setubal	18	8	2	8	29	25	18
Belenenses	18	6	6	6	19	15	18
Vit. Guimaraes	18	8	1	9	28	23	17
Braga	18	5	6	7	21	25	16
Estoril	18	3	9	6	15	20	15
Portimonense	18	5	4	9	18	25	14
Leixoes	18	2	10	6	8	18	14
Montijo	18	4	5	9	15	28	13
Beira-Mar	18	3	6	9	23	40	12
Atletico	18	2	5	11	13	45	9

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	20	13	5	2	46	20	31
Aberdeen	21	10	8	3	37	21	28
Rangers	21	10	6	5	35	22	26
Dundee United	19	11	3	5	37	26	25
Hibernian	20	3	13	4	18	20	19
Hearts	21	5	8	8	32	38	18
Partick Thistle	19	5	6	8	17	26	16
Motherwell	18	5	5	8	29	33	15
Ayr United	21	5	4	12	26	42	14
Kilmarnock	22	2	6	14	22	47	10

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	26	15	5	6	45	25	35
Ipswich	23	14	6	3	42	20	34
Manchester City	24	12	10	2	38	16	34
Aston Villa	24	13	3	8	46	29	39
Middlesbrough	24	11	7	6	22	21	29
Manchester Utd.	24	11	6	7	44	34	28
Arsenal	25	10	8	7	41	36	28
Leicester	26	8	11	7	32	38	27
Leeds	24	9	8	7	30	29	26
Newcastle	21	9	7	5	35	27	25
Birmingham	26	9	6	11	41	41	24
Norwich	25	9	6	10	28	33	24
West Bromwich	24	7	9	8	31	29	23
Coventry	22	8	7	7	28	27	23
Queen's PR	21	7	5	9	27	31	19
Stoke	23	6	7	10	13	26	19
Derby	22	5	8	9	27	31	18
Everton	24	6	6	12	33	47	18
Tottenham	24	6	5	13	30	48	17
Bristol City	22	5	6	11	21	26	16
West Ham	25	5	5	14	21	37	15
Sunderland	26	3	7	16	14	36	13

Continued overleaf

Real Madrid versus Barcelona, left to right: Cruyff, Clares, Sol, Camacho and Pirri. The match ended 1-1.

Classified Results

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	pts
Nantes	24	14	6	4	50	29	34
Lyon	24	12	8	4	40	26	32
Bastia	24	12	7	5	57	40	31
Lens	24	12	7	5	51	37	31
Nice	24	13	2	9	41	32	28
St-Germain	24	11	5	8	44	36	27
Nancy	24	10	6	8	51	39	26
St-Etienne	24	9	7	8	33	25	25
Metz	24	9	7	8	34	31	25
Reims	24	8	8	8	37	42	24
Bordeaux	24	9	5	10	40	38	23
Laval	24	9	5	10	30	39	23
Nimes	24	7	8	9	26	33	22
Marseille	24	9	4	11	32	44	22
Sochaux	24	8	5	11	33	40	21
Angers	24	7	7	10	32	40	21
Valenciennes	24	7	6	11	33	36	20
Troyes	24	8	4	12	28	40	20
Lille	24	5	3	16	26	43	13
Rennes	24	4	4	16	21	49	12

WORLD CUP
South American Qualifying
Group 2
February 9

VENEZUELA (0) 1 (Flores)
URUGUAY (1) 1 (Olivera)

Venezuela: Romero, Ellios, Betancourt, Ochoa, Marin (Fuemayor), Salas, Iriarte, Moss, Flores, Echenausi, Mora (Garcia).

Uruguay: R. Rodriguez, De los Santos, Villazan, Ramirez, Graffigna, Morales, Pizzani (Santelli), Carrasco, Morena, D. Pereyra (Unanue), Olivera.

Referee: Guillermo Velazquez (Colombia). Att: 5,000

INTERNATIONALS
January 9

PARAGUAY (2) 2 (Colman, Aquino)
ECUADOR (0) 0

Paraquay: Benitez, Solalinde, Aifuch, Tabarelli, Insfran, Torres (Maldonado), Sosa, Colman (Gonzalez), Aquino, Villaba, Baez.

Ecuador: Delgado, Mendez, Camacho, Carreras, Ortiz, Tenorio (Torres), Granda, Villafuenta, Rhon (Mansilla), Liciardi, Nieves.

January 16

COLOMBIA (0) 0
ECUADOR (1) 1 (Liciardi)

Ecuador: Delgado, Mendez, Camacho, Villena, Klinger, Gomez, Granda (Tenorio), Villafuerte, Rhon, Liciardi (Pasmino), Nieves.

Colombia: Zape, Segovia, Escobar, Zarate, Bolano, Retat, Calero (Ortega), Imana (Caceres), Castaheda, Villarete, Rios. Att: 50,000

January 22

VENEZUELA (1) 1 (Moss)
ECUADOR (0) 0

January 23

URUGUAY (1) 2 (Morales, Santelli)
PARAGUAY (0) 1 (Villalba)

Uruguay: R. Rodriguez (Araujo), De los Santos, Villazan, Ramirez, Graffigna, Morales, Pizzani, Carrasco (Unanue), Morena, D. Pereyra, Yanes (Santelli).

Paraguay: A. Benitez, Aifuch, Espinola, Solalinde, A. Sosa, E. Benitez, Isasi (Aquino), Torres, Villalba (Paniagua), Colman (D. Gonzalez), Barreiro.

Referee: Luis De Rosa.

BRAZIL (0) 1 (Roberto)
BULGARIA (0) 0

Brazil: Leao, Ze Maria, Beto, Amaral, Marinho, Zico, Givanildo, Fuscao, Gil, Roberto, Lula.

Bulgaria: Grastev, Tchalev, Penev, Delev, Samolkovsky, Dermendkev, Kolchev, Rainov, Simov, Grigorov, Nikolov. Att: 55,000

January 26

CHILE (3) 4 (Crisosto 3, Rojas)
PARAGUAY (0) 0
ECUADOR 4 (Liciardi 2, Villafuerte, Rhon)
COLOMBIA (Retat) 1

January 30

COLOMBIA (0) 0
YUGOSLAVIA (1) 1 (Bajevic)

Colombia: L. Lopez, Caicedo, Bolaños, Calero, Escobar (Zárate), Umana, J. Lopez, Cáceres, Retat, Ortiz (Castaheda), Villarete.

Yugoslavia: Katalinic, Bajevic, Petrovic, Vladir (Jasarevic), Zavisic (Bogdan), Hukic, Kovacevic (Filipovic), Pavkovic, Secerbegovic, Peruzovic, Hadziabdic.

URUGUAY (0) 3 (Pizzani, Morena, Pereyra)
CHILE (0) 0

Uruguay: R. Rodriguez, Ramirez, De los Santos, Morales, Villazán, Carrasco, Graffigna, Pereyra, Pizzani (Victorino), Morena, Olivera.

Chile: Vallejos, Galindo, Quintano, Rojas (Soto), Escobar, Dubo, Herrera, Miranda, Pinto, Crisosto, Orellana.

Referee: Norberto Coerezza (Argent.)

February 2

MEXICO (3) 5 (Chavez, Jelenivic o.g., Isiorda, Jimenez, Vasquez)
YUGOSLAVIA (1) 1 (Bajevic)

Mexico: Camacho, Nájera, Guzman, Sanchez-Galindo, Vazquez, Chavez, Real, Guiler, Isiordia, Jimenez, Cuellar.

Yugoslavia: Katalinik, Perozovic, Jelenivic, Bogoam, Handziabic, Hadeinoc, Hodenivic, Rajkovic, Kabizic, Bajevic, Kezervecovics.

PARAGUAY (1) 2 (Baez, Aifuche)
CHILE (0) 0

Paraguay: Benitez, Solalinde, Issasi, Aifuche, Insfran, Torres (Gonzalez), Sosa, Maldonado (Colman), Aquino (Bareiro), Villalba, Baez.

Chile: Neff, Galindo (Arias), Quintano, Soto, Escobar, Rojas (Salinas), Dubo, Ahumada, Pintos, Crisosto, Orellana.

February 6
"Paz del Chaco" Cup (1st leg)

BOLIVIA (0) 0
PARAGUAY (0) 1 (Bareiro)
MEXICO 0
YUGOSLAVIA 1

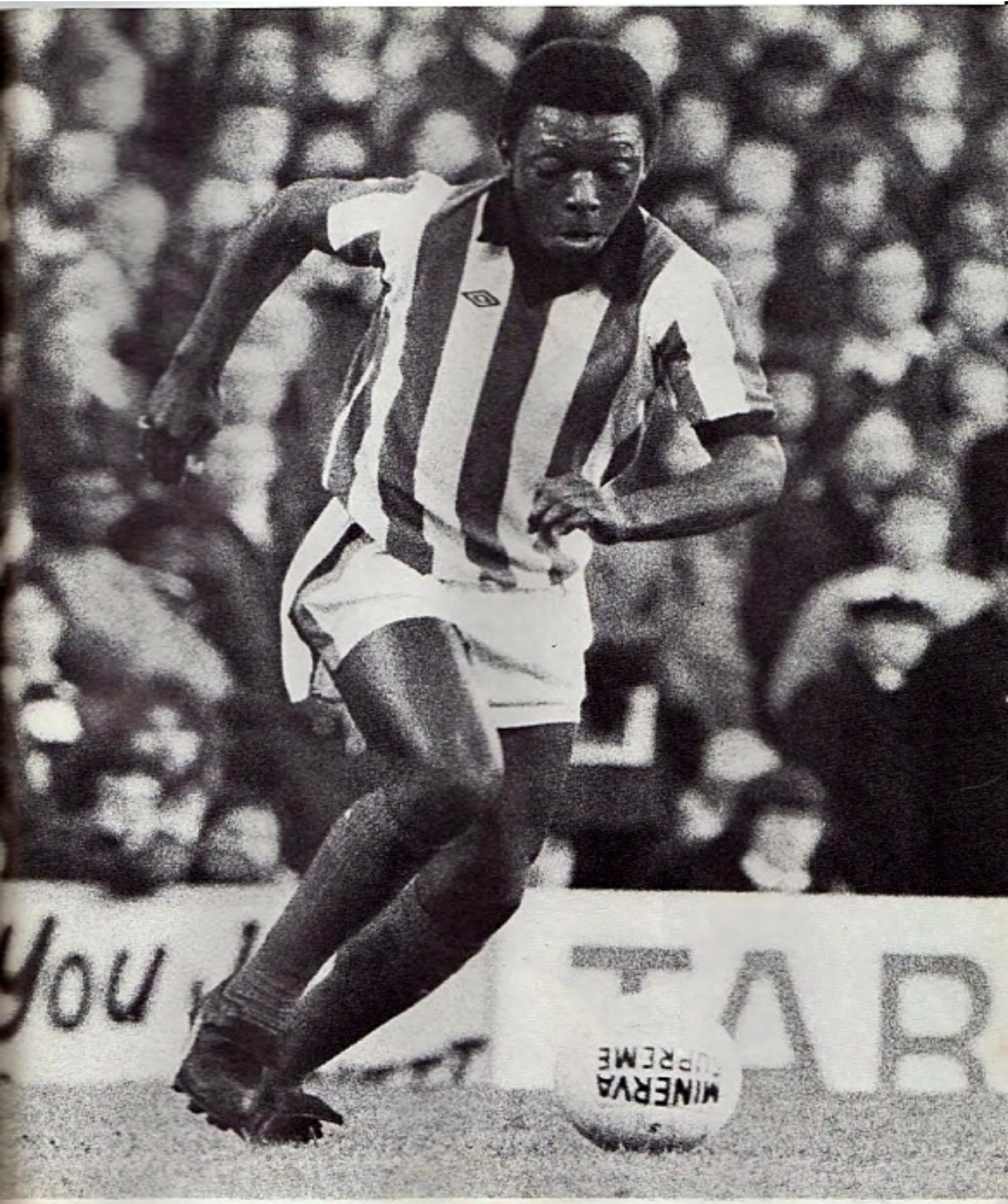
February 9

PERU (2) 3 (Velasquez 2, Sotil)
HUNGARY (1) 2 (Grozigs, Vagyar)

Peru: Gonzalez Ganosa (Quiroga), Soria, Melendez, Salguero, Diaz, Quesada, Valesquez, Rojas, Palacios (Sotil), Cubillas, Ramirez.

Hungary: Kovacs, Torok, Balint, Keresi, Toth, Rab, Ebeji, Pinter, Pusztal, Torocsik, Vagyar, Grozigs.

Aston Villa's Brian Little (right) beats the outstretched QPR goalkeeper Phil Parkes to score his side's first goal in the Football League Cup semi-final replay which Villa won 3-0 at Highbury.



GARTH CROOKS Stoke City

World SOCCER

CEMIL Fenerbahce and Turkey